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Conflict on Wisdom

The Role of Scripture in 1 Corinthians 1-4

Cover: This picture (by the author) from Hay-on Wye illustrates the phenomenon of intertextuality. As the street is partly visible behind the wall, Scripture is present behind Paul's letter.

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CONFLICT ON WISDOM
THE ROLE OF SCRIPTURE IN 1 CORINTHIANS 1-4

Proefschrift
ter verkrijging van de graad van doctor in de godgeleerdheid
aan de Universiteit van Tilburg
op gezag van de rector magnificus, prof.dr. Ph. Eijlander,
in het openbaar te verdedigen
ten overstaan van een door het college voor promoties aangewezen commissie
in de aula van de Universiteit
op vrijdag 29 oktober 2010 om 14.15 uur

door

Harm-Jan Inkelaar
geboren op 28 juni 1954 te Zwolle

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prof.dr. F. Wilk

Woord vooraf

Het is geen last geweest om deze dissertatie te schrijven. Ik heb het met veel plezier gedaan. Ik heb niet het gevoel dat het lang geduurd heeft, al ging er naast een deeltijd predikantschap toch redelijke tijd overheen voor het klaar was. In 2004 kon ik tijdens drie maanden studieverlof de eerste twee hoofdstukken schrijven. Ik heb het getroffen met prof. Wim Weren als eerste promotor. Hij gaf mij vrijheid om zelf gestalte te geven aan de intertextuele benadering zoals hij die ontwikkeld heeft. Daarin gaat het, om met Pascal te spreken, om een combinatie van *esprit de géométrie* en *esprit de finesse*, van scherp waarnemen en het leggen van de juiste verbanden. Zijn methodische scherpste stond mij niet toe om in wetenschappelijk werk in beeldspraak te ‘vervallen’. Ik vond dat jammer maar een studie wint ontegenzeggelijk aan scherpste wanneer een helder gebruik van termen en concepten gehandhaafd blijft. Bij het leggen van verbanden heb ik zijn kritiek vaak als raak ervaren. Op sommige punten raakte ik pas later overtuigd van zijn concept, nadat ik eerst een eigen koers was gegaan. Op andere punten was mijns inziens, in het bijzonder bij Paulus, aanvulling of bijstelling nodig.

De tweede promotor, prof. Arie van der Kooij, was eveneens onmisbaar. Het was een geluk dat er een specialist op het gebied van de Septuaginta en andere vroege versies van het Oude Testament in de buurt was, in Leiden, en dat hij bovendien bereid was als tweede promotor op te treden. Als nieuwtestamenticus had ik op dat terrein nog veel te leren en hij kwam gedurende het schrijven van het derde deel vaak met gerichte opmerkingen, waarmee ik mijn voordeel heb kunnen doen. De gezamenlijke besprekingen waren steeds vruchtbaar. Volgens mij zit er in Paulus’ brieven meer humor dan wij door hebben. We verwachten het gewoon niet van hem. Zo gaat het niet alleen met apostelen maar ook met geleerden, vooral met beide bovengenoemde.

Er zijn vrienden met wie ik van gedachten heb kunnen wisselen en die me hebben bemoedigd om op deze weg door te gaan. Ik denk aan Sjaak Visser, Els Groeneveld, Gijs Bronsveld, Hélène Evers, Johan Graafland, Hetty Lalleman, aan jaargenoten en collega’s. Anderen hebben een gedeelte gelezen en gereageerd, zoals Pieter Lalleman en Bert ten Kate. Ger Blok en Gerri-Janne de Kwant hielpen me bij de vormgeving.

Dankbaar ben ik ook voor de Protestantse gemeenten, Gastel & Kruisland en Oudenbosch, waar ik mag werken. De levens van deze mensen houden mij met de beide benen op de grond. Omdat er veel speelt in kerk en maatschappij is de turbulente gemeente van Korinte geen andere wereld. De ervaring van kerk zijn nu maakt de houding van Paulus zowel verbazingwekkend als richtinggevend.

Blij ben ik dat mijn moeder nog bij ons is, meelevend en betrokken, net zo als mijn schoonmoeder. Jammer is het dat mijn vader al zo veel eerder is heengegaan. Bij deze afronding denk ik bewust aan hem. Tenslotte verheug ik mij over mijn lieve vrouw Charlotte, die als een kleurige dobber altijd boven water blijft temidden van de golven. Ik had me geen betere vrouw kunnen wensen. Samen zijn wij gezegend met twee vrolijke dochters, Jedidja en Lenore, en samen hebben jullie mijn incidentele verstrooidheid verdragen.

Oudenbosch, 19 juli 2010

Contents

INTRODUCTION.....	9
ABBREVIATIONS	11
 PART I: APPROACH	15
CHAPTER 1: RESEARCH OVERVIEW	17
1. RELIGION-HISTORICAL APPROACHES	17
<i>On conflict in Corinth</i>	18
2. SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACHES	19
<i>On conflict in Corinth</i>	20
3. RHETORICAL APPROACHES	21
<i>On conflict in Corinth</i>	23
4. LITERARY-HISTORICAL APPROACHES	24
<i>Conflicting traditions</i>	27
CHAPTER 2: INTERTEXTUALITY	29
1. THE TESTIMONY HYPOTHESIS	29
2. THE CONCEPT OF INTERTEXTUALITY	31
3. INTERTEXTUALITY AS A LITERARY PHENOMENON	33
<i>Tradition</i>	33
<i>Allusion</i>	34
4. INTERTEXTUALITY IN NEW TESTAMENT STUDIES	35
<i>Retracing citations</i>	35
<i>Defining segments</i>	36
<i>Interaction</i>	37
<i>Transformations</i>	37
<i>Structure</i>	38
5. INTERTEXTUALITY IN THE PAULINE LETTERS	38
 PART II: 1 CORINTHIANS 1-4.....	43
CHAPTER 3: TEXT	45
TRANSLATION	45
<i>Excursus on 4:6a</i>	61
<i>Excursus on 4:6b</i>	63
CHAPTER 4: LITERARY STRUCTURE	65
1. DEMARCATIONS	65
<i>The letter</i>	65
<i>Letter opening</i>	67
<i>Textual unit</i>	68
<i>Patterns</i>	69
2. RHETORICAL ANALYSIS.....	71
<i>Paul and rhetoric</i>	71
<i>Rhetorical genre</i>	74

<i>Dispositio</i>	77
CHAPTER 5: THEMATIC STRUCTURE	81
1. DIVISIONS	81
2. WISDOM	86
3. THE WORD OF THE CROSS	87
4. BOASTING.....	92
5. THE SPIRIT	93
6. BUILDING	95
7. APOSTLESHIP.....	97
8. OVERVIEW.....	99
CHAPTER 6 WISDOM IN HISTORICAL CONTEXT	101
1. WISDOM IN CORINTH.....	101
2. CORINTHIAN AFFINITIES WITH HELLENISTIC JUDAISM	107
<i>Salvation</i>	109
<i>The wise person</i>	112
<i>Body and mind</i>	114
<i>Eschatology</i>	115
<i>Revelation</i>	118
3. WISDOM IN CONTEMPORANEOUS JEWISH LITERATURE	121
<i>Baruch and Sirach</i>	121
<i>4 Maccabees</i>	123
<i>Wisdom of Solomon</i>	124
<i>Daniel and Qumran</i>	127
CONCLUSIONS PART II	131
 PART III: SCRIPTURE IN 1 CORINTHIANS 1-4	 135
CHAPTER 7: INTRODUCTION	137
1. SCRIPTURE, GREEK AND HEBREW	137
2. CLARIFICATION OF TERMS.....	143
3. QUOTATIONS	145
3.1 <i>A List</i>	146
3.2 <i>Pre-texts</i>	147
3.3 <i>Catchwords</i>	148
3.4 <i>Quotation thresholds</i>	150
3.5 <i>The function of quotations</i>	151
4. OUTLOOK	152
CHAPTER 8: WISDOM AND THE CROSS (1 COR 1:18-25)	153
1. STRUCTURAL AND SEMANTIC FEATURES OF 1 COR 1:18-25	153
1.1 <i>Antithesis</i>	153
1.2 <i>Paradox</i>	154
1.3 <i>The position of the quotations</i>	156
2. SCRIPTURE.....	157
2.1 <i>The Quotation in 1 Cor 1:19</i>	157
Isa 29:11-12.....	158
Isa 29:13	160

Isa 29:14a	162
Isa 29:14b	164
Isa 29:15-16	166
2.2 <i>Implicit quotations in 1 Cor 1:20</i>	169
Isa 33:18	169
Isa 19:11-14	170
Isa 44:24-28	174
3. RECEPTION OF SCRIPTURE IN 1 COR 1:18-25	176
3.1 <i>Discontinuity</i>	177
Times have changed	177
3.2 <i>Continuity</i>	180
Shocking the wise	180
CHAPTER 9: WISDOM AND BOASTING (1 COR 1:26-31)	181
1. STRUCTURAL AND SEMANTIC FEATURES OF 1 COR 1:26-31	181
1.1 <i>Teleology</i>	181
1.2 <i>Redefinition</i>	182
1.3 <i>The position of the quotation</i>	184
2 SCRIPTURE	185
2.1 <i>Topoi</i>	185
Election	185
The poor	186
Shame	186
Boasting	187
All flesh	188
2.2 <i>The Quotation in 1 Cor 1:31</i>	189
Jer 8-10: questioning the wise	189
Jer 9:22-23 (LXX and MT; 9:23-24 Eng.)	190
1 Kgdms 2:10	193
3. RECEPTION OF SCRIPTURE IN 1 COR 1:26-31	195
3.1 <i>Discontinuity</i>	195
Transforming Jer 9:23	195
Election instead of reversal	197
3.2 <i>Continuity</i>	199
Twofold boasting	199
Doxology	200
CHAPTER 10: WISDOM AND THE SPIRIT (1 COR 2)	203
1. STRUCTURAL AND SEMANTIC FEATURES OF 1 COR 2	203
1.1 <i>Semantic oppositions</i>	203
1.2 <i>Cognitive language</i>	204
1.3 <i>Judicial language</i>	205
1.4 <i>The position of the quotations</i>	206
1 Cor 2:9	206
1 Cor 2:16	207
2. SCRIPTURE	209
2.1 <i>Substructures</i>	209
1 Cor 2:6-7 and Isa 31:1-3	209
1 Cor 2:8-10 and Isa 52:13-53:1	210
1 Cor 2:6-16 and the book of Daniel	213

2.2 <i>The Quotation in 1 Cor 2:9</i>	216
1 Cor 2:9a and Isa 64:4 (LXX).....	217
1 Cor 2:9b and Isa 65:16-17.....	221
1 Cor 2:9c.....	223
2.3 <i>The quotation in 1 Cor 2:16</i>	225
Isa 40:12-14.....	225
3. RECEPTION OF SCRIPTURE IN 1 COR 2	228
3.1 <i>Discontinuity</i>	228
Wisdom revealed.....	228
Vision downplayed.....	229
3.2 <i>Continuity</i>	231
The role of rulers	231
The term psychikos	232
The intellectual emphasis of LXX Isaiah	234
CHAPTER 11: WISDOM AND LEADERSHIP (1 COR 3-4)	237
1. STRUCTURAL AND SEMANTIC FEATURES OF 1 COR 3-4	237
1.1 <i>Semantic contrasts (3:1-4)</i>	237
1.2 <i>Extended metaphors (3:5-17)</i>	238
1.3 <i>Recapitulation (3:18-23)</i>	238
1.4 <i>Apostleship and the cross (4:6-13)</i>	239
1.5 <i>The position of the quotations</i>	241
Implicit quotations in 1 Cor 3:10-11	241
Explicit quotations in 1 Cor 3:19-20	241
An implicit quotation in 1 Cor 4:4	242
2. SCRIPTURE.....	243
2.1 <i>Topoi</i>	243
The building metaphor	243
The final test.....	244
2.2 <i>Implicit quotations</i>	245
Isa 3:3	245
Isa 28:16	248
Job 27:6	248
2.3 <i>The explicit quotations</i>	249
Job 5:13	249
Ψ 93:11.....	252
3. RECEPTION OF SCRIPTURE IN 1 COR 3-4	255
3.1 <i>Discontinuity</i>	255
Leadership	255
New vantage point.....	256
3.2 <i>Continuity</i>	256
Genre and style.....	256
Foolish and vain	257
Flesh and spirit	258
CONCLUSIONS PART III.....	261

CHAPTER 12: CONCLUDING REMARKS.....	267
1. THE ROLE OF SCRIPTURE.....	267
<i>Evaluating the intertextual approach.....</i>	<i>267</i>
<i>Context</i>	<i>269</i>
<i>Septuagint.....</i>	<i>270</i>
<i>Hebrew</i>	<i>270</i>
2. THE CONFLICT ON WISDOM	271
<i>Twofold wisdom.....</i>	<i>271</i>
<i>The language of dispute</i>	<i>272</i>
<i>The language of creation.....</i>	<i>274</i>
<i>The word of the cross</i>	<i>275</i>
APPENDIX: LIST OF PARALLELS	277
 PRIMARY SOURCES.....	 281
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY	282
SUMMARY.....	301
SAMENVATTING.....	303

Introduction

It was after reading J.-F. Lyotard's *Le Différend* (1983) that my interest was drawn to 1 Corinthians 1-4. It seemed to me that Lyotard's analysis of the fate of small narratives in the modern intellectual world had a parallel in Paul's view of the fate of the gospel in the Greco-Roman world. An important purpose of Lyotard's book is to give witness to that which differs ("témoigner du différend," p. xiii). Lyotard distinguished sharply between two forms of narrative: 'petites histoires' and the one prevailing 'Histoire.' In the first type of narrative names and places are all-important, while in the second type these particulars fade away in the universal story of humanity. Between these two types of narrative there exists a 'différend.'

Because modern western society attributes epistemological legitimacy only to the universal narrative, a small narrative is not likely to receive a serious hearing. It is made into an object of cognition of the universal narrative and is judged according to the criteria of the universal narrative, criteria that are not her own. The central concern of the small narrative disappears in the background when the universal narrative begins to deal with it. The concern of the small narrative is at odds with the concern of its judge, the universal narrative (cf. §224).

The acute 'différend' observed by Lyotard between a governing general narrative and a small specific narrative recalls the way the apostle Paul situates the word of the cross in relation to the wisdom of the world in 1 Corinthians 1-4. The word of the cross is judged to be foolishness in terms of the criteria of the contemporaneous universal wisdom discourse. Paul's preaching is a small narrative that stands and falls with a particular name and a particular event: Jesus the Messiah and his crucifixion. Paul is certain that by giving in and by expressing this small narrative in terms of the prevailing wisdom discourse, the reality of the cross of Christ vanishes so that its good news becomes meaningless (1:17).

Lyotard was especially interested in the fate of small narratives in the modern period. He looks at the dominant cognitive genre exemplified by the speculative philosophy of Hegel and developed in two versions during the nineteenth century, in historical idealism and historical materialism, as two grand narratives of rationality and progress. The second, Marxist, variant has become a phantom so that the first now claims universal sovereignty. It may be an interesting question whether a parallel exists between the prevailing wisdom discourse Paul faced and our modern narrative of universal progress. Paul challenged the intellectuals (the wise men, the scribes, and the debaters, 1:20) and the powerful of his day ('the rulers of this age,' 2:6) who ruled out a Messiah who did not suit their agenda (2:8). What is foolishness in their and our eyes, a crucified Saviour with his followers of no account, may just be the wisdom of God.

Paul and Lyotard agree on the existence of a conflict of narratives but they also differ. The philosopher sought to create an open space and a right to speak for small narratives without offering one, but the apostle does proclaim a specific small narrative. The paradox of his gospel is that it does not offer a universal idea but a particular person and at the same time announces that this particular person has a universal meaning, either as a skandalon to take offence at (1:23) or as a rock to build on (3:11).

The original impulse of this study may have been philosophical, its execution is not. Its purpose is not to see whether Paul has allies among the philosophers but to discover whether he has friends among the prophets. This book addresses the question whether an intertextual analysis advances our understanding of Paul's text. We start from the assumption that the quotations do not simply provide authority but signal the presence of intertextual relationships between 1 Cor 1-4 and segments of Scripture. In the conclusions of Part III and in the final chapter we will evaluate whether this assumption has been appropriate and fruitful. Two important sub questions are 1) what is the central theme of 1 Cor 1-4? and 2) what is the role of Scripture in relation to this theme?

Part I and Part II prepare the ground for Part III, Part I by outlining the intertextual approach in comparison with other approaches, Part II by discussing the linguistic/semantic (Ch. 3), rhetorical (Ch. 4), and thematic (Ch. 5) arrangement of 1 Cor 1-4, apart from its relationship with Scripture. According to scholarly consensus, 1 Cor 1-4 manifests a conflict but views differ regarding the nature of the conflict (Chapter 1). This study argues that the text contains foremost a conflict on wisdom. Chapter 6 explores the Corinthian contribution to the conflict by considering the religious-historical context of their wisdom. The same chapter compares Paul's stance on wisdom with a variety of views in contemporaneous Judaism. The centre of gravity of the book is Part III, which discusses the way in which Paul takes recourse to Scripture in developing his own and confronting his readers' understanding of wisdom.

The recent study by H.H.D. Williams concludes that Scripture is much more present in 1 Cor 1:18-3:23 than has been realized up till now, not only in the evident form of explicit quotations, but "most prominently by the large number of implicit references found within this passage."¹ In these first chapters of 1 Corinthians, Scripture not only lends support, but also plays an important role in advancing the argument and even in supplying theological ideas.²

The present study continues where the work of Williams left off. This study focuses on one specific theme: *wisdom*, and its method is specifically *intertextual*. The term 'intertextuality' suffers from a confusing multiplicity of interpretations. We define it as both a phenomenon and an approach. Intertextuality as a phenomenon entails that a text has absorbed parts of other texts. As approach it studies this phenomenon and uses the observations for the interpretation of the text. The study by Williams does not present an extended analysis of 1 Cor 1-4 or of the particular passages from which the quotations have been derived. Instead it gives a great deal of attention to the presence of the particular quotations in early Jewish writings, in order to evaluate the influence of early Jewish interpretation on 1 Cor 1-3.³ This the present study will not do. Its purpose is to

¹ H.H.D. Williams, *The Wisdom of the Wise: The Presence and Function of Scripture within 1 Cor. 1:18-3:23* (Leiden: Brill, 2001) 331-2.

² Williams, *Wisdom of the Wise*, 334.

³ Williams, *Wisdom of the Wise* is primarily concerned with tracing themes of the OT-quotations through the intertestamental literature aiming at "a thorough investigation of the interpretation of Scripture within early Jewish writings to see what assistance these texts may lend to understanding particular Scripture texts that Paul employs." (24) An *intertextual* study with a focus on specific OT-passages in their relationship with 1 Cor 1-4 still needs to take place.

study the intertextual relationship with Scripture. Questions in the semantic, structural, and rhetorical areas guide this approach: In what way does Scripture contribute to the meaning of wisdom in 1 Cor 1-4? Does the argument in 1 Cor 1-4 reproduce patterns and structures of the pre-text? Do the rhetorical features of Scripture passages influence and strengthen the rhetorical impact of 1 Cor 1-4?

Abbreviations

The following abbreviations indicate works of reference and commentaries that occur regularly in the text or in the footnotes. Abbreviations of series, periodicals, and primary sources follow *The SBL Handbook of Style for Ancient Near Eastern, Biblical, and Early Christian Studies* (Ed. P.H. Alexander et al.; Peabody: Hendrickson, 1999). Except for my own translation of 1 Cor 1-4 (see Chapter 3) and when otherwise indicated, translations are from the NRSV (for NT, OT and Deuterocanonical Books), NETS (Septuagint), and OTP (Pseudepigrapha).

Frequently used works of reference and Bible translations:

- | | |
|-------|---|
| BAG | Bauer, W., W.F. Arndt, and F.W. Gingrich. <i>Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> . Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957. |
| BDAG | Bauer, W., F.W. Danker, W.F. Arndt, and F.W. Gingrich. <i>Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> . 3 rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999. |
| BDB | Brown, F., S.R. Driver, and C.A. Briggs. <i>A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> . Oxford: Clarendon, 1979. |
| BDR | Blass, F., A. Debrunner, and F. Rehkopf. <i>Grammatik des neutestamentlichen Griechisch</i> . 15th ed. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1979. |
| BJ | <i>Bible de Jerusalem</i> (3 rd ed.) |
| GELS | Muraoka, T. <i>A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint</i> . Leuven: Peeters, 2009. |
| GK | Gesenius, W., and E. Kautsch, <i>Hebräische Grammatik</i> . 28 th ed. Leipzig: Vogel, 1909. |
| HR | Hatch, E. and H. A. Redpath. <i>A Concordance to the Septuagint and the other Greek versions of the Old Testament (including the apocryphal books)</i> 2 nd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998. |
| LEH | Lust, J., E. Eynikel, and K. Hauspie. <i>A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint</i> . Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1992, 1996. |
| LSJ | Liddell, H. G., R. Scott, and H.S. Jones, <i>A Greek-English Lexicon</i> . 9 th ed. with Supplement. Oxford: Clarendon, 1983. |
| LXX-D | Kraus, W., and Karrer, M., eds. <i>Septuaginta Deutsch. Das griechische Alte Testament in deutscher Übersetzung</i> . Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2009. |
| MGM | Moulton, W.F. and A.S. Geden, eds., <i>A Concordance to the Greek Testament</i> . |

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- Moule Moule, C.F.D., *An Idiom Book of New Testament Greek*. Cambridge: University Press, 1953.
- NASB *New American Standard Bible*
- NEB *New English Bible*
- NETS Pietersma, A., and Wright, B.G., eds. *A New English Translation of the Septuagint*. Oxford: University Press, 2007.
- NIV *New International Version*
- NRSV *New Revised Standard Version*
- OTP Charlesworth, J.H., ed. *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*. Volumes 1 and 2. New York: Doubleday, 1983, 1985.
- THAT Jenni, E. and C. Westermann, eds. *Theologisches Handwörterbuch zum Alten Testament I-II*. Zürich: Theologischer Verlag, 1984.
- TWAT Botterweck, G.J., and H. Ringgren, eds. *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Alten Testament*. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1979–1993.
- TWNT Kittel, G. *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament I-X*. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1933–1979.
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PART I: APPROACH

The problem that has drawn most attention of exegetes for the last two centuries is the nature of the conflict in Corinth. From the time of F.C. Baur many have sought to describe two or more conflicting movements in this young urban church. These movements were supposed to be of a religious nature. About four decades ago an interest arose in the social nature of these conflicts, stimulated by a growing understanding of social conditions in the Roman Empire. Alongside this new focus a new sensibility has arisen for the role of ancient rhetoric especially in the area of solving conflicts and promoting unity. These approaches have drawn the attention to 1:10 as starting point for a rhetorical argument, to 1:12 as indication for religious divisions, or to 1:26 as description of social divisions.

Chapter 1: Research Overview

1 Corinthians 1–4 is a remarkable text. Even after a long history of exegesis the text retains an enigmatic and elusive quality. This chapter offers a critical overview of the research on 1 Cor 1–4. Concentrating on the last fifty years four types of approaches may be distinguished. The sequence in which these will be discussed represents more or less the historical order. The first type of approaches could be called religion-historical (*religionsgeschichtlich*), the second sociological, the third rhetorical, and the fourth tradition-historical. This chapter also mentions the proposals of these approaches regarding the nature of the conflict(s) presented in 1 Cor 1–4. The various types of approaches have offered interpretations of the tensions within the addressed community or in the text itself. *Conflict* is a familiar term in the literature on 1 Cor 1–4.¹

1. Religion-historical approaches

The year 1956 saw the publication of *Die Gnosis in Korinth*, written by W. Schmithals.² This book belonged to the *religionsgeschichtliche Schule*, which interpreted the Pauline letters on the basis of Greek-oriental religious ideas. In line with R. Bultmann, Schmithals saw in the Corinthian letters a clear reflection of Greek-Gnostic ideas, manifesting themselves both in the church of Corinth and in Paul's written response. For example, the Gnostic myth of a heavenly redeemer was supposed to guide the apostle in his thoughts on divine wisdom in 1 Cor 2:6–16. U. Wilckens also applied the Gnostic thesis extensively to the Corinthian letters, in particular to 1 Cor 1–2.³ D. Lührmann argued that Paul in 1 Cor.2:6–16 made use of a 'revelation-scheme' of Gnostic origin.⁴ In subsequent years, however, it became increasingly difficult to maintain the Gnostic thesis because there was little evidence for the existence of a pre-Christian Gnosticism. In 1979 Wilckens revised his views in a long article on 1 Cor 2:1–16 and concluded that neither the Corinthians nor Paul had been influenced in their theology by Gnosticism.⁵

¹ E.g. D.W. Kuck, *Judgment and Community Conflict: Paul's Use of Apocalyptic Judgment Language in 1 Corinthians 3:5–4:5* (Leiden: Brill, 1992); B. Witherington, *Conflict and Community in Corinth: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on 1 and 2 Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995); T. J. Burke and J. K. Elliott, eds., *Paul and the Corinthians: Studies on a Community in Conflict. Essays in Honour of Margaret Thrall* (Leiden: Brill, 2003).

² W. Schmithals, *Die Gnosis in Korinth. Eine Untersuchung zu den Korintherbriefen* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1956).

³ U. Wilckens, *Weisheit und Torheit. Eine exegetisch-religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung zu 1. Kor. 1 und 2* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1959), also in "Kreuz und Weisheit," *KuD* 3 (1957) 77–108, and "σοφία κτλ," *TWNT* 7:497–529 (esp. 520–3).

⁴ D. Lührmann, *Das Offenbarungsverständnis bei Paulus und in paulinischen Gemeinden* ((Neukirchen : Neukirchener Verlag, 1965) 113–117, 133–140.

⁵ U. Wilckens, "Zu 1 Kor 2,1–16," in *Theologia Crucis – Signum Crucis* (ed. C. Andresen and G. Klein; Tübingen: Mohr, 1979) 501–37; 'Weder die korinthische noch die paulinische Theologie

Others have looked in the direction of Judaism to come to a better understanding of the origin of the ideas prevalent in Corinth. A. Schlatter defended Jewish influence in Corinth and emphasized that those who are mentioned as leaders of the parties (Paul, Apollos, and Cephas) all are Jews.⁶ Schlatter underlined the role of Cephas and with him the role of Palestinian Jewish Christianity. Similarly, according to M. Goulder Paul's "real worry is the Cephas group,"⁷ with their predilection for 'wisdom' in the sense of 'torah'.⁸

More common however has become the view that the letter is dealing with Hellenistic-Jewish traditions within the church of Corinth. R. Horsley observes a Hellenistic-Jewish tradition represented by Philo and the Wisdom of Solomon as background to the particular religiosity which Paul is challenging in 1 Corinthians.⁹ In Hellenistic-Jewish circles eloquence, divine wisdom, and spiritual status were valued highly. According to a number of authors, Apollos may very well have introduced the wisdom interest in Corinth and could have been the direct or indirect cause of the divisions in the church of Corinth.¹⁰ Others are more reserved about the role of Apollos. C. Wolff, for example, draws attention to the role of the Hellenistic synagogue in Corinth instead, since a good number of the Corinthian Christians would have been previously affiliated with the synagogue with the status of 'Godfearers'.¹¹ The church of Corinth was not a *tabula rasa* when it came into existence. We should reckon with the Hellenistic Jewish as well as the Greek pagan heritage of its members, in the form of traditions as well as practices.¹²

On conflict in Corinth

1 Cor 1:12 ("Each of you is saying, 'I belong to Paul,' or 'I belong to Apollos,' or 'I belong to Cephas,' or 'I belong to Christ'") has been taken by F.C. Baur to refer to factions (*Parteien*) in Corinth in support of his thesis of a Jewish-Christian and a Hellenistic-

sind gnostisch beeinflusst gewesen. Die Gnosis ist vielmehr eine spätere Bewegung ..' (537). See also the more recent evaluating article: J.-M. Sevrin, "La Gnose à Corinthe," in *The Corinthian Correspondence* (ed. R. Bieringer; Leuven: 1996) 121-39.

⁶ Schlatter 24, 85.

⁷ M. Goulder, "ΣΟΦΙΑ in Corinthians," *NTS* 37 (1991) 516-34, esp. 534.

⁸ Goulder, "ΣΟΦΙΑ," 521. According to Goulder, the term σοφία was adopted instead of νόμος because σοφία sounded more attractive to Greek ears (521). See for the development of equating torah and wisdom, M. Hengel, *Judentum und Hellenismus* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1988) 307-18, 566-8.

⁹ R. Horsley, "Wisdom of Word and Words of Wisdom in Corinth," *CBQ* 39 (1977) 225. This article is reprinted in his collection with other relevant essays, *Wisdom and spiritual transcendence at Corinth: studies in First Corinthians* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2008). An overview of Hellenistic-Jewish influence reflected in 1 Cor 1-4 is found in Merklein 119-33.

¹⁰ Horsley, "Wisdom of Word," 231; G. Sellin, "Das Geheimnis der Weisheit und das Rätsel der Christuspartei," *ZNW* 73 (1982) 69-96; Merklein 134-9; J.F.M. Smit, "What is Apollos? What is Paul?," *NovT* 44 (2002) 231-51; M. Konradt, "Die korinthische Weisheit und das Wort vom Kreuz," *ZNW* 94 (2003) 181-214.

¹¹ Wolff 10.

¹² See Fee 14 and Schrage 51.

Christian movement in the early church.¹³ The influence of Jewish Christianity in Corinth cannot be substantiated from 1 Corinthians but was presupposed by Baur in order to give support to his historical reconstruction of early Christianity as a dialectical process of two opposing movements. Baur's interpretation of 1 Cor 1–4 has been very influential, although it was modified in many ways. His view that 1:12 refers to full-fledged religious parties has determined the study of 1 Cor 1–4 for more than a century.¹⁴ Still we know hardly anything of the divisive situation and therefore all precise descriptions like 'parties,' 'fractions,' 'groups' and 'cliques' remain unsatisfactory from a historical and sociological perspective.¹⁵

2. Sociological approaches

In the early seventies of the previous century a new avenue was opened up. The sociological study of the Corinthian letters took shape especially through the work of G. Theissen.¹⁶ Theissen states that the sociological interest is not a new development but a natural consequence of historical criticism. In his opinion sociological study is the extension of historical research in areas as customs, values and institutions.¹⁷ In the area of Old Testament studies there is a reasonable amount of information on the social life of Israel and its neighbors. In the New Testament we find less evidence for social description. In this respect Theissen points to a methodological problem: "How does one obtain information about sociological circumstances from religious expressions in our sources?"¹⁸ To arrive at an approach which renders the text susceptible for a sociological interpretation, the exegete must make use of sociological theory. Sociological models are needed to analyze the primarily religious sources.¹⁹ Especially M. Weber's contributions to the sociology of religion have proven useful in Old Testament studies.²⁰

¹³ F.C. Baur, "Die Christuspartei in der korinthischen Gemeinde, der Gegensatz des petrinischen und paulinischen Christentums in der alten Kirche," *Tübinger Zeitschrift für Theologie* 1831, Heft 4, 61–206; repr. in *Ausgewählte Werke in Einzelausgaben I* (Stuttgart: Frommann Verlag, 1963) 1–146.

¹⁴ W. G. Kümmel, *Einleitung in das Neue Testament* (21st ed.; Heidelberg: Quelle und Meyer, 1983) 235–8; Schmithals, *Gnosis*, 38–41: "In einer erstaunlich umfangreichen Literatur ist diese erweiterte Baur'sche These in zahlreichen Modifikationen vorgetragen worden" (38).

¹⁵ Schrage 142.

¹⁶ In English translation his earlier essays on Corinthians are found in *The Social Setting of Pauline Christianity* (trans. J.H. Schütz; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1990).

¹⁷ G. Theissen, "Zur forschungsgeschichtlichen Einordnung der soziologischen Fragestellung," in *Studien zur Soziologie des Urchristentums* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1979), 3–34.

¹⁸ G. Theissen, "The Sociological Interpretation of Religious Traditions," in *Social Setting*, 176.

¹⁹ R. Scroggs, "The Sociological Interpretation of the New Testament: The Present State of Research," in *Theology and Sociology* (ed. R. Gill; London: Cassell, 1996) 254–75, cautions that sociological models "are useful in so far as they have heuristic value, that is, in so far as they serve to illumine the *unique* phenomenon the researcher is studying" (257). He suggests two criteria for choosing a method: "First, we need to understand fully how the method works and to be clear that it *can* be applied to the data at hand. Secondly, we need to know both the theoretical

In the area of the New Testament the theoretical distinction made by E. Troeltsch between sect and church has been adapted by Theissen to differentiate between two types of early Christian communities: the Jesus movement in Palestine, characterized by ethical radicalism and the churches Paul wrote to, manifesting an ethic of love-patriarchalism. In this love-patriarchalism, mutual love made it possible for diverse people to live together as one community without changing their outward social status. This ethical position offered integration at the religious level without revolutionary changes on the social level. Also in line with Troeltsch's distinction between sect and church, Theissen distinguished two types of missionaries: wandering charismatics and community organizers. The members of the first group of Palestinian missionaries – pictured in the teaching of Jesus in the gospels – were dependent on the gifts of others. Paul and Barnabas were different and belonged to the second group that was geared to Hellenistic urban society; they earned their own living. This difference in lifestyle is viewed as a source of conflict in the church of Corinth (reflected in the letters in 1 Cor 9 and 2 Cor 10–12).²¹ The originally Marxist theory of conflict and integration is adapted by Theissen for use in NT studies. While Marxist theory presupposes a class conflict in the socio-economic sphere, Theissen speaks of a multitude of connected conflicts in several spheres: socio-economic, socio-political, socio-cultural, socio-ecological.²²

On conflict in Corinth

Below or just above the surface in 1 Cor 1–4 one may sense the presence of social conflicts. Theissen adduces 1 Cor 1:26–28 and 4:11–13 to support his thesis of social stratification in the Corinthian community.²³ C.K. Robertson interprets Paul's effort in 1 Cor 1–6 with the help of modern theory as a 'conflict management approach.'²⁴ L.L. Welborn supposes that Paul takes sides in an internal church-struggle: "By expressing

presuppositions and implications of the use of the method. Is it compatible with other (e.g., theological) presuppositions we may hold?" (256).

²⁰ H.-J. Kraus, "Die Anfänge der religionssoziologischen Forschungen in der alttestamentlichen Wissenschaft," in *Biblisch-theologische Aufsätze* (Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 1972) 296–310. On Weber's approach see C.S. Rodd, "Max Weber and Ancient Judaism," in *Theology and Sociology*, 225–37, questioning "as to how far comparisons between societies widely separated in time and by geography are valid" (233).

²¹ G. Theissen, "Legitimation and Subsistence: An Essay on the Sociology of Early Christian Missionaries," in *Social Setting*, 27–67. Sociological studies have thrown light on Paul's avoidance of financial support in Corinth. Those who supported Paul would tend to see themselves as his 'patrons', who deserved immaterial benefits "in terms of status, influence, or leadership role within the church" (Thiselton 663). See also Peter Marshall, *Enmity in Corinth: Social Conventions in Paul's Relations with the Corinthians* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1987).

²² Theissen, "Zur Einordnung," 29–30.

²³ Theissen, "Social Stratification in the Corinthian Community," in *Social Setting*, 69–119, 72–3, 97–8.

²⁴ C.K. Robertson, *Conflict in Corinth. Redefining the System* (New York: Lang, 2002): Paul responds to the conflict by redefining the system of the church as a network of familial relationships.

solidarity with the despised and oppressed (1:26-28), Paul sought, like a Greek politician of old, to bring the δῆμος into his faction.”²⁵ Welborn stresses the political character of the conflict and the terminological resemblances with accounts of Greek historians on conflicts within city-states. In his view, “it is a power struggle, not a theological controversy, which motivates the writing of 1 Corinthians 1-4.”²⁶ The apparent theological controversy in 1 Cor 1-4 is Paul’s interpretation of a political power struggle. His theological interpretation is intended “to transform the Corinthians’ understanding of the conflict” and to turn them away from politics.²⁷ There is value in Welborn’s calling attention to the political aspect in the text, however only a *tour de force* can make the political into the dominant dimension. At this point of our survey this political interpretation offers a suitable transition from the sociological to the rhetorical approaches. Rhetoric, after all, is at home in the *polis*.

3. Rhetorical approaches

The third way of dealing with 1 Cor.1-4, one which is at least as prominent today as the sociological starting point, is the study of rhetorical features of the text. It has been rather silent in this area after an early contribution of J. Weiss,²⁸ who drew attention to rhetorical style in the Pauline letters. However, a new interest developed during the last quarter of the twentieth century. A large part in the revival of rhetoric has been played by H.D. Betz.²⁹ It was especially his work on Galatians which drew general attention.³⁰ The

²⁵ L.L. Welborn, “On the Discord in Corinth: 1 Corinthians 1-4 and Ancient Politics,” *JBL* 106 (1987) 85-111, 101.

²⁶ Welborn, “Discord,” 89.

²⁷ Welborn, “Discord,” 109-11.

²⁸ J. Weiss, “Beiträge zur paulinischen Rhetorik,” in *Theologische Studien* (FS B. Weiss; eds. E.R. Gregory et al.; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1897) 165-247 esp. 201-10.

²⁹ See his own account “The Problem of Rhetoric and Theology according to the Apostle Paul,” in *L’Apôtre Paul. Personnalité, Style et Conception du Ministère* (ed. A. Vanhoye; Leuven: University Press, 1986) 16-48. Other overviews may be found in: J. Lambrecht, “Rhetorical Criticism and the New Testament,” *Bijdragen* 50 (1989) 239-53; Witherington 55-61; Thiselton 46-52.

³⁰ H.D. Betz, “The Literary Composition and Function of Paul’s Letter to the Galatians,” *NTS* 21 (1974-75) 353-79; yet his view that “rhetoric, as antiquity understood it, has little in common with the ‘truth’,” but that it is “the exercise of those skills which make people believe something to be true,” (378) is hard to accept for antiquity in general and is very difficult to reconcile with the expressed intentions in the letters of Paul. Also: H.D. Betz, *Galatians: A Commentary on Paul’s Letter to the Churches in Galatia* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979). W.D. Davies, “Galatians: A Commentary on Paul’s letter,” in *Jewish and Pauline Studies* (London: SPCK, 1984) 172-88, criticizes Betz for moving too quickly from the Greco-Roman world to the interpretation of Galatians, thereby ignoring or minimizing the Jewish factor. Even in predominantly Gentile churches this factor cannot be circumvented because the non-Jewish Greek segment of the early Christian communities consisted largely of proselytes and God-fearers who had first lived on the fringe of the Jewish synagogue (175-6).

relevance of ancient rhetoric for understanding the Pauline letters is still a debated issue.³¹ The “unduly neglected”³² study of N. Schneider, *Der rhetorische Eigenart der paulinischen Antithese* is valuable in regard to 1 Cor 1–4, especially when we look for the primary locus of conflict.³³

Among rhetorical approaches a distinction may be made between two orientations.³⁴ The first orientation concentrates on the rules and function of ancient rhetoric. An important exponent is M. Mitchell, whose study on the composition of 1 Corinthians aims at “an historical rhetorical analysis in the light of the literary/rhetorical conventions operative in the first century.”³⁵ The other orientation, which may be put under the heading ‘New Rhetoric’ because of its dependency on recent theory, has a wider interest than historical reconstruction. In this orientation the effect of the text on readers past and present is emphatically taken into account.³⁶

The classical as well as the new rhetorical approaches consider it important to determine the genre of 1 Corinthians according to the rules set by classical theoreticians of rhetoric.³⁷

³¹ According to D. Litfin, *St. Paul's Theology of Proclamation. 1 Corinthians 1–4 and Greco-Roman Rhetoric* (Cambridge: University Press, 1994) Paul firmly distances himself from Greco-Roman rhetoric. M. Hengel and A.M. Schwemer, *Paul Between Damascus and Antioch* (London: SCM, 1997) even state that “the significance of the rhetoric of the schools on Paul is much exaggerated today, following a fashionable trend” (171). G. A. Kennedy, *Classical Rhetoric and Its Christian and Secular Tradition from Ancient to Modern Times* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980) highlights the differences between Christian preaching and classical rhetoric. In a general survey he states that in the New Testament the message is brought not by persuasion, but by proclamation and is based on authority and grace, not on proof (127). Litfin, *St. Paul's Theology*, refines this global view in his conclusion that in regard to Paul, “techniques designed to enhance the attention or comprehension of the listener may have been quite acceptable, while those rhetorical strategies designed to promote yielding would have appeared inappropriate to him, because it is the work of the Spirit to induce πίστις” (261–2). It should be added that in his *New Testament Interpretation through Rhetorical Criticism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984) Kennedy takes a positive approach to features of ancient rhetoric in the Pauline letters.

³² Thiselton 47.

³³ N. Schneider, *Der rhetorische Eigenart der paulinischen Antithese* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1970). Schneider considers antithesis not only as a matter of rhetorical style but also of theological expression (3).

³⁴ Witherington 55–61 (with extensive bibliography) states: “The modern discussion of rhetoric and the Corinthian corpus is divided into two major camps” (57).

³⁵ M.M. Mitchell, *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1991) 8. Mitchell investigates 1 Corinthians not only on the basis of ancient theory (the handbooks) but also on the basis of ancient practice of rhetoric in actual speeches (8–10).

³⁶ Defended by W. Wuellner, “Where is Rhetorical Criticism Taking Us?” *CBQ* 49 (1987) 448–63.

³⁷ E.g. Aristotle, distinguishes “three kinds of rhetorical speeches, deliberative, forensic, and epideictic” in *The ‘Art’ of Rhetoric* (Τέχνη ῥητορική) (trans. J.H. Freese; LCL; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1975) I, 3.3.

- Usually the letter is likened to a *deliberative* speech, which wants to motivate to action and belongs to public meetings.³⁸
- 2 Corinthians has been classified as belonging to the *forensic* (or judicial) genre because in that letter the apostle is engaged in self-defense. Some have found this genre also in 1 Corinthians.³⁹
- The third genre, the *epideictic*, evokes assent and affirms communal values, it praises or blames. Some have thought 1 Corinthians to belong to this type.⁴⁰

On conflict in Corinth

The most thoroughgoing rhetorical approach has been developed by Mitchell. She takes 1:10 as the *propositio* for the whole letter followed by 1:11–17 as *narratio* and 1:18–15:57 as *argumentatio* with finally 15:58 as *conclusio*. Only the last chapter stands apart as an epistolary closing. This means that the whole letter is an “argument for ecclesial unity,” as expressed by the *propositio* “I appeal to you, my brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ: agree among yourselves and avoid divisions” (NEB). According to Mitchell, factionalism is an “inherently political problem,” which must be dealt with by the use of appropriate political terms and the appropriate rhetorical genre, which is deliberative rhetoric.⁴¹ “Deliberative rhetoric, the rhetoric of the assembly, is often primarily concerned with such matters as political stability and unity.”⁴² Mitchell agrees with Welborn⁴³ on the essentially political character of the conflict in Corinth.⁴⁴ Witherington concurs with Mitchell on the deliberative character of the letter and its main purpose “to reconcile members of a faction-ridden congregation to each other.”⁴⁵ But he has a different view of the character of the divisions. Because a Christian *ekklesia* is at issue and not a secular assembly, he prefers not to speak of political divisions but of social divisions over teachers or rhetors.⁴⁶ It must be asked, however, whether a political or social

³⁸ Thus Mitchell, *Paul and Rhetoric*, 1; Witherington 46; Thiselton 48; Schrage 80; E. Schüssler Fiorenza, “Rhetorical Situation and Historical Reconstruction in 1 Corinthians,” *NTS* 33 (1987) 399.

³⁹ J.S. Vos, “Weltliche und geistliche Rhetorik (1 Kor 1,10–3,4),” in J.S. Vos, *Die Kunst der Argumentation des Paulus* (Tübingen: Mohr, 2002) 29–64, esp. 63–4. Vos emphasizes the apologetic colouring of the passage and observes in 1:10–3:4 both the deliberative and the apologetic, that is forensic, genre.

⁴⁰ Wuellner, “Paul as Pastor,” in *L’Apôtre Paul*, 62 opts for the epideictic genre because of the frequent use of praise and blame; In “Where is Rhetorical Criticism Taking Us?” 460 he looks for support in 1 Corinthians’ educational character; J. Smit, “Epideictic Rhetoric in Paul’s First Letter to the Corinthians 1–4,” *Bib* 84 (2003) 184–201 underlines the skilful use of figures of style, esp. encomia, in this section.

⁴¹ Mitchell, *Paul and Rhetoric*, 1.

⁴² Mitchell, *Paul and Rhetoric*, 61.

⁴³ Welborn, “Discord.”

⁴⁴ Mitchell, *Paul and Rhetoric*, 68, n.13 and esp. 65–80.

⁴⁵ Witherington 46. He underlines the Greek meaning of ἐκκλησία as public assembly.

⁴⁶ Witherington 100, n.4.

interpretation may not lead to a reduction of the meaning of 1 Cor 1-4. A balanced view of the text shows that some reserve is in order here:

In the first place the church is addressed in the letter as a whole and not as the sum of several parts. The statements in 1:12 do not warrant the conclusion of a divided church.⁴⁷ A large part of the problem may have consisted in the secular attitude of celebrating one's own teacher.⁴⁸ In the second place it is not at all certain that παρακαλῶ in 1:10 introduces a rhetorical argument for unity that covers 1 Cor 1-4. It may very well express an exhortation on the basis of the authority of the author as ἀπόστολος (1:1). In addition, the request is presented with the theological motivation "in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."⁴⁹ In the third place, to subsume the whole under an appeal to unity does not do justice to the rich and varied text of 1 Cor 1-4. Welborn and Mitchell rightly observe that the problems in 1 Cor 1-4 are expressed in some terms with political connotations, but it should not be overlooked that the text deals more extensively with the problem of wisdom. In Chapter 4.2 we will deal more extensively with the function of rhetoric in 1 Cor 1-4 and in Chapter 5.1 we will discuss the issue of divisions.

4. Literary-historical approaches

Beyond the approaches already mentioned, exegetes have tried to gain more clarity by closely observing the text itself, especially with regard to possible sources that have been used. Here we do not think of traditions or ideas current among the Corinthian audience, but of sources available to the author of the text.⁵⁰ Several suggestions have been made about the origins of these sources:

1. Paul's own teaching practice. Because a direct literary dependence on Jewish wisdom literature cannot be demonstrated, H. Conzelmann proposed the

⁴⁷ This view has been defended with some exaggeration by J. Munck, "The Church without Factions," in *Paul and the Salvation of Mankind* (London: SCM, 1959) 135-67, who speaks of 'bickerings' or 'cliques' instead of 'factions' (138-9).

⁴⁸ B. Winter, "Secular Discipleship and Christian Competitiveness," in *After Paul Left Corinth. The Influence of Secular Ethics and Social Change* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001) 31-57, says about sophist pupils: "They were encouraged to be extremely zealous (ζήλος) in demonstrating their loyalty to their teacher. At the same time they created strife (ἐρις) by means of trenchant criticism of perceived deficiencies of other teachers" (39).

⁴⁹ Thiselton 109-12; D. L. Stamps, "The Christological Premise in Pauline Theological Rhetoric: 1 Corinthians 1.4-2.5 as an Example," in *Rhetorical Criticism and the Bible* (eds. S.E. Porter and D.L. Stamps; London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002) 441-57, 450; R. Baumann, *Mitte uns Norm des Christlichen. Eine Auslegung von 1 Korinther 1,1-3,4* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1968) 46-8, summarizes earlier viewpoints, before rhetorical approaches took root. G.A. Kennedy, *Classical Rhetoric*, 120-132, considers (appeal to) 'authority' a distinctive feature of Judeo-Christian rhetoric.

⁵⁰ See the first approach; cf. Vos, "Rhetorik," 61-2, about 2:6-16: "Selbstverständlich greift Paulus in diesem Abschnitt auf Traditionen zurück – es sind vor allem weisheitliche und apokalyptische –, aber an keiner Stelle ist glaubhaft zu machen, daß er spezielle Vorstellungen der Korinther aufnimmt."

existence of a wisdom-school led by the apostle Paul. Support for this proposal may be found in the book of Acts (e.g. 19:9: the lecture hall of Tyrannus in Ephesus). Oral instruction on wisdom could explain the prominence of wisdom-motifs in the first part of 1 Corinthians.⁵¹ We may agree that Paul's oral teaching is likely to have involved explanation and discussion and that in Hellenistic Jewish and Greek circles the theme of wisdom was important, yet there is little evidence of him running a 'wisdom-school.'

2. Christian traditions. While Conzelmann already emphasized the corporate character of Paul's mission enterprise, E.E. Ellis attributes an even greater share to Paul's colleagues. In his view Paul's fellow-workers may have provided written material, which was incorporated in 1 Corinthians. These contributions may "explain breaks in the context and variations of style, vocabulary and theological expression throughout 1 Corinthians."⁵² Thus, 1 Cor 1:18-31 and 2:6-16 are examples of midrash-like traditions.⁵³ V. Branick⁵⁴ discovers in 1 Cor 1:18-3:23 a continuous midrashic homily on wisdom,⁵⁵ interspersed with applications to the situation of the church of Corinth.⁵⁶ This would mean that part of the text is application and another part is not directly related to Corinth but teaching of a more general nature. Branick observes that beyond what seems directly relevant in this text to the situation in Corinth, "there exists an excess of theological meaning."⁵⁷
3. Jesus-traditions. Several places in the letter (7:10-11; 9:14; 11:23-25) make clear that Paul knew and used words or teachings of Jesus. This signals a link with the

⁵¹ See also Conzelmann 82 with the comment on 2:6-16: "Offenbar trägt Paulus hier eigene Weisheit vor," a result of his 'Schularbeit.'

⁵² E.E. Ellis, "Traditions in 1 Corinthians," *NTS* 32 (1986) 496.

⁵³ Ellis, "Traditions," 490; In "How the New Testament Uses the Old," in *New Testament Interpretation* (Exeter: Paternoster, 1977) 203-4, Ellis also considers 1 Cor 1:18-31 a *midrash*. In his view a *midrash* is to be considered not only as the complement of the synagogue worship (sermon or homily) but also as the product of the synagogue school (commentary). A *midrash* contains in simple form: (i) theme and initial Scripture texts – (ii) an exposition linked to initial and final texts by catchwords – (iii) a final text.

⁵⁴ V. Branick, "Source and Redaction Analysis of 1 Corinthians 1-3," *JBL* 101 (1982) 251-69, 264.

⁵⁵ Consisting of 1:18-31, 2:6-16 and 3:18-23.

⁵⁶ In 2:1-5 and 3:1-17.

⁵⁷ Branick, "Source," 267, 269: "The homily in itself exceeds in its theological richness the particular situation to which Paul applies it. Like the Christological hymn of Phil 2:6-11 used secondarily as an exhortation to humility, or the hymn to charity of 1 Cor 13 used to relativize the more spectacular gifts of the Spirit, the pre-existent material of the homily surpasses in theology the context in which it is placed. Such a literary procedure gives greater depth to the surrounding context. It would be a mistake however, to reduce the meaning of the pre-existent composition to its secondary application."

Gospel tradition. But on closer observation, the influence of this tradition can not be firmly established.⁵⁸

4. Jewish traditions. Especially concerning 1 Cor 2:6-16 the use of Hellenistic Jewish wisdom teaching has been suggested. Besides mentioning factors like the Jesus-tradition and the Christian experience of the Spirit, P. Stuhlmacher states that “the principal pronouncements of the apostle in vv 11-16 carry on from the Hellenistic-Jewish wisdom tradition right down to the details.”⁵⁹ These traditions, as found in Sirach and the Wisdom of Solomon would have their *Sitz im Leben* in the Jewish ‘wisdom schools’ of the Diaspora.⁶⁰ Others refer to the writings of Philo to elucidate the meaning of the terms used in 2:6-16.⁶¹ In the latter case, however, there is not so much the suggestion of Philo as a source as of the climate in which both the Corinthians and Paul operated. The Hellenistic-Jewish religious climate in Corinth will receive special attention in chapter 6. It must be questioned whether Hellenistic-Jewish wisdom literature can account in a substantial way for the ideas expressed in 1 Cor 1-2. There are not only similarities but also differences especially in orientation which reduce the plausibility of 1 Cor 1-2 building on these traditions. A number of differences are listed here:
 - a) An optimistic epistemology. Like Stuhlmacher observes in an early article, Hellenistic Judaism was optimistic about man’s natural capability to know the mind of God in contrast with the ‘pessimistic’ view in 1 Cor 1-2.⁶²
 - b) The equation of wisdom and Torah. Early Jewish wisdom literature affirmed a close connection or even equated wisdom and Torah.⁶³ This is quite unlike 1 Cor 1-4.
 - c) The praising of great men. The later chapters of Sirach (44-50) are dedicated to the praise of figures of biblical history. This is in contrast with the earlier Old

⁵⁸ C.M. Tuckett, “1 Corinthians and Q,” *JBL* 102 (1983) 607-19, notes the striking set of parallels between some of the language of 1 Cor 1-4 and the Q-saying in Matt 11:25-27//Luke 10:21-22, but concludes that the particular language in 1 Cor 1-4 derives in fact from Isa 29:14 (608, 618).

⁵⁹ P. Stuhlmacher, “The Hermeneutical Significance of 1 Cor 2:6-16,” in *Tradition and Interpretation in the New Testament* (ed. G.F.Hawthorne; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987) 328-47, 337.

⁶⁰ Stuhlmacher, “Significance,” 336.

⁶¹ Wilckens, “Zu 1 Kor 2,1-16,” 501-37; Sellin, “Geheimnis,” 69-96.

⁶² “Glauben und Verstehen bei Paulus,” *EvT* 26 (1966) 337-48; 1 Cor 1-2 agrees in this respect with Apocalyptic Jewish literature: “Das hellenistische Judentum besitzt einen, wenn man so sagen darf, optimistischen Begriff von der Erkenntniskraft des Menschen; der kosmologische und anthropologische, zum Dualismus hin tendierende Pessimismus der Apokalyptik verbietet einen solchen. ... Weisheit und Einsichtgabe in das Geschichtswalten Gottes sind darum für den Apokalyptiker Heilsgaben schlechthin” (340).

⁶³ W.D. Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism* (2nd ed. London: SPCK, 1955) 168-71; Hengel, *Judentum*, 307-18; G. von Rad, *Weisheit in Israel* (Gütersloh: Mohn, 1992) 314-7.

Testament witness⁶⁴ and with a recurrent motto in 1 Cor 1-4 “not to boast in men.”

- d) The striving after wisdom and eloquence. In Jewish-Hellenistic circles wisdom⁶⁵ and eloquence⁶⁶ were highly valued just like in Greek-Roman culture. The Jewish-Hellenistic acceptance of wisdom and eloquence seems to have influenced the Corinthian audience but is resisted in 1 Cor 1-4.
- e) The leisure of the wise man. This is a minor point but it illustrates a general difference between the Greek and the Jewish view of occupations. According to the orientation of Sirach (38:24-30:11) the wise scribe must not be occupied with other tasks, but the apostle states that he works with his own hands (1 Cor 4:12).

These features show that there were considerable differences between Hellenistic-Jewish wisdom traditions and the apostle's position in 1 Cor 1-4. In this section we may even discern a critical attitude towards these features. It is much more likely that these traditions have been influential in the church of Corinth than that they have been used by the apostle in the composition of 1 Cor 1-4. Elsewhere in the letter mention is made of (Christian) traditions (15:1,3) or Jesus-traditions (7:10-11, 9:14, 11:23-25), but in 1 Cor 1-4 the key formula is not παρέλαβον but γέγραπται. In 1 Cor 1-4 the role of tradition must be inferred but the role of Scripture is made explicit and invites serious attention. The possible influence of more or less contemporary traditions is not to be denied, but in this text the role of Scripture seems to take first place. In Part III we will seek to discover how much 1 Cor 1-4 has in common with wisdom-traditions in Scripture.

Conflicting traditions

The religion-historical, sociological and rhetorical approaches draw attention to communal conflict in Corinth but a tradition-historical approach concerns itself with different traditions in 1 Cor 1-4. These traditions may converge or diverge. In the eyes of several exegetes the two passages 1:18-2:5 and 2:6-16 represent conflicting traditions. W. Bousset, for example, saw a contrast between the simple proclamation of the message of the cross in 1:18-2:5 and the higher wisdom in 2:6-16.⁶⁷ J. Weiss says that the position presented in 2:6 offers a sharp contrast after wisdom has been refused in the preceding part of the text.⁶⁸ This alleged conflict between the two passages has been one of the vexing problems of 1 Cor 1-4. Nevertheless, in the last decades there is a growing consensus towards the compatibility of the passages. C. Wolff writes that in substance the

⁶⁴ Von Rad, *Weisheit*, 330, states on Sirach: “Die großen Männer, nicht Gott selbst und seine Geschichtspläne, sind der Gegenstand der Darstellung, ja des Lobpreises. Man wandelt hier durch die Geschichte wie durch die Säle einer Ruhmeshalle.” Also A. van den Born, *Wijsheid van Jezus Sirach* (BOT 8/5; Roermond: Romen, 1968) 212.

⁶⁵ In the form of *paideia*: Hengel, *Judentum*, 120-30, 243; Von Rad, *Weisheit*, 334; M. Konradt, “korinthische Weisheit,” 194.

⁶⁶ Konradt, “korinthische Weisheit,” 190-1; Horsley, “Wisdom of Word,” 230-2.

⁶⁷ Bousset, 72: “Wir halten uns lieber an den Paulus der einfach und schlicht vom Evangelium des Kreuzes redet und sind zufrieden, daß er uns von seiner ‘höheren’ Weisheit nicht viel mitteilt.”

⁶⁸ Weiss 52.

Pauline wisdom preaching does not go beyond the message of the crucified Christ. The second passage is an explication of the first missionary preaching in the area of God's plan of salvation.⁶⁹ The detailed recent study of H.-C. Kammler even argues that the wisdom of God does not have an independent content besides the crucified Christ; this wisdom rather refers to the crucified Christ.⁷⁰ We should recognize, however, that notwithstanding a certain continuity between 1:18-2:5 and 2:6-3:4, a differentiation in teaching according to the receptivity and maturity of the audience can not be denied (3:2).⁷¹ We hear of πνευματικοί – called τέλειοι in 2:6 – who are able to understand. It is attractive to view these τέλειοι as the initiated in Hellenistic mysticism⁷² but a particular mystery-religion's character of the term cannot be substantiated.⁷³ It is reasonable to suppose that instead of conflicting traditions in 1:18-2:5 and 2:6-16, the second passage offers either advanced teaching or the same word of the cross seen in a different light.

In this chapter we have observed several interpretations of the conflict in Corinth. F.C. Baur surmised a religious conflict between Jewish and Hellenistic Christianity. More recently support has been assembled for divisions caused by social inequalities and for the rhetorical character of Paul's response to these conflicts. We finally mentioned a conflict of different strands of tradition that were incorporated in the text. However, all these versions of the conflict do not seem to be able to explain the thrust of 1 Cor 1-4. Throughout the section one particular contrast remains. In this study we will take into consideration whether the essential conflict presented by the text is not a conflict between movements, parties, leaders, or traditions but a conflict between two manifestations of wisdom.

⁶⁹ Wolff 52.

⁷⁰ H.-C. Kammler, *Kreuz und Weisheit: Eine exegetische Untersuchung zu 1 Kor 1,10-3,4* (Tübingen: Mohr, 2003) 245. In his Christological interpretation of wisdom Kammler even identifies the wisdom of God in 1:21a with Jesus Christ (89).

⁷¹ Schlatter 108-9 recognizes the advanced character of the teaching in 2:6-16 and illustrates this from another Pauline letter: "Wenn wir neben jene Fassung des Worts, die einzig vom Gekreuzigten sprach, Phil. 2, 6-11 stellen, dann lässt sich als ein Beispiel für ein Wort, das zu den Vollkommenen gesprochen ist, Phil. 3, 7-15 anführen" (109).

⁷² Lietzmann 12; Scroggs, "Paul: Sophos and Pneumatikos," *NTS* 14 (1967/68) 33-55, 54: "esoteric Christian apocalyptic-wisdom teaching"; Conzelmann, 83: the reason why the wisdom presented in 2:6-16 has been withheld at first is not a matter of *Arkandisziplin* but a matter of pedagogy.

⁷³ LSJ, s.v., *TWNT* 7:70, Lindemann 62.

Chapter 2: Intertextuality

*My enthusiasm for philosophy began in the same way
as my enthusiasm for poetry or the Bible,
by responding to texts that sang to me.
Writing retraces those paths that sing (chantent) to us
and thus enchant (enchantent) us.
In this sense I see a close relationship
between philosophy, theology and poetics.
Philosophy never speaks to us in the abstract with a capital P;
but in the engaging terms of certain chosen texts (morceaux choisis).
(Stanislas Breton)¹*

1. The testimony hypothesis

The frequent occurrence of Scripture in 1 Corinthians 1–4 has led L. Cerfaux in 1931 to propose the presence of a *testimonia* collection behind the present text.² In this way both the common wisdom theme and common keywords of the Scripture references could be accounted for. According to Cerfaux the origin of this collection would most likely be found in Jewish–Hellenistic circles, who wished to fortify themselves against Greek philosophy.³

J. Munck⁴ rejected this proposal of a *testimonia* collection and points out that Paul shows familiarity with the context of the citations: e.g., not only is Isa 29:14 cited in 1 Cor 1, but Isa 29:16 is also alluded to in Rom 9:20; not only is Ps 94:11 cited in 1 Cor 3 but Ps 94:14 is also alluded to in Rom 11:1f.⁵ Accordingly, Paul is not only familiar with separate quotations but also with verses from the context.⁶ As Doeve says: "To a mind with the

¹ R. Kearney, "Dialogue with Stanislas Breton" in *Dialogues with contemporary Continental Thinkers* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984) 100.

² L. Cerfaux, 'Vestiges d'un florilège dans 1 Cor.1,18–3,23?', *Recueil Lucien Cerfaux*, Tome II (Gembloux : Duculot, 1954) 319–32. On the testimony theory see also R. Hodgson, "The Testimony Hypothesis," *JBL* 98 (1979) 361–78 and M.C. Albl, "And Scripture Cannot Be Broken": *The Form and Function of the Early Christian Testimonia Collections* (Leiden: Brill, 1999).

³ Cerfaux, "Vestiges," 325.

⁴ J. Munck, "The Church without Factions," in *Paul and the Salvation of Mankind* (London 1959; German original: Copenhagen 1954) 135–67.

⁵ Munck, "Church without Factions," 145–6.

⁶ Yet instead of broadening the *testimonia* theory Munck attributes the Scripture references to Paul's memory, because memory easily leads "to combine several scriptural passages and to condense or change individual passages" ("Church without Factions," 145). J.R. Wagner opts for a combination of various ways of appropriating Scripture: besides excerpt collections and memory also meditation on memorized passages, hearing of spoken texts and personal reading of written

Jewish habit of thought a passage in Scripture derives its force precisely from the fact that it is in Holy Scripture. It is not the detached passage, the separate text, that has weight".⁷ Doeve directs this statement against the testimony theory, which he deems invalid for the time of the New Testament: "Words lifted from their Scriptural context can never be a testimonium to the Jewish mind. The word becomes a testimonium for something or other after one has brought out its meaning with the aid of other parts of Scripture."⁸

C.H. Dodd, after using the testimony hypothesis for many years, decided in 1952 that the theory was quite inadequate.⁹ He concluded from the evidence that the focus of attention should not be on a collection of texts but on the method of biblical study practiced by the New Testament authors: "The method included, first, the selection of certain large sections of the Old Testament Scriptures, especially from Isaiah, Jeremiah and certain minor prophets, and from the Psalms."¹⁰ Certain portions of Scripture apparently were of special interest to the New Testament authors. Dodd's thesis of specific fields within the Old Testament as areas of attention for New Testament authors keeps finding support as a useful starting point for investigation.¹¹ C. Hickling observed that Paul's practice of quotation showed an uneven distribution across the book of Isaiah.¹² There is a concentration of quotations from chapters 9-11, 28-29, 49-51 (relating to Paul's own mission) and chapters 52-55. Hickling suggested that Paul's reading might have concentrated on certain sections of the book, "so that passages came to mind in a variety of situations."¹³ This emphasis on *passages* instead of individual texts comes in the vicinity of the intertextual approach.

Dodd did not only draw attention to an interest in Scripture passages but also to the relationship of quotations to the passages in which they occurred. These sections "were understood as *wholes*, and particular verses and sentences were quoted from them rather *as pointers to the whole context* than as constituting testimonies in and for

texts, J. R. Wagner, *Heralds of the Good News: Isaiah and Paul 'in Concert' in the Letter to the Romans* (Leiden: Brill, 2002) 25-6.

⁷ J.W. Doeve, *Jewish Hermeneutics in the Synoptic Gospels and Acts* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1953) 115.

⁸ Doeve, *Jewish Hermeneutics*, 116, "Therefore it is, a priori, rather improbable that the Old Testament testimonia of the New Testament could be simply based on a booklet of Testimonia."

⁹ C.H. Dodd, *According to the Scriptures: The Sub-structure of New Testament Theology* (London: Nisbet, 1952) 26.

¹⁰ Dodd, *Scriptures*, 126.

¹¹ I.H. Marshall, "An Assessment of Recent Developments," in *It is Written: Scripture Citing Scripture* (ed. D. A. Carson and H.G.M. Williamson; Cambridge: University Press, 1988) 1-24, 7.

¹² C.J.A. Hickling, "Paul's Reading of Isaiah," in *Studia Biblica 1978: III* (ed. E.A. Livingstone; Sheffield, 1980) 215-23.

¹³ Hickling, "Paul's Reading," 216; moreover "it seems that the creative influence widely acknowledged to have been exercised by the Old Testament on the beginnings of Christian thought arose at least in some cases through a continuous reflective reading of extended passages" (218).

themselves.”¹⁴ Furthermore, in crucial passages “it is the *total context* that is in view, and is the basis of the argument.”¹⁵

2. The concept of intertextuality

In chapter 1 we could not speak of a single religion–historical, sociological, rhetorical or tradition–historical approach but only of a multiplicity of approaches. Likewise there is not one intertextual approach, but a variety of intertextual approaches. An introductory study observes: “Intertextuality is not a transparent term, and so, despite its confident utilization by many theorists and critics, cannot be evoked in an uncomplicated manner. Such a term is in danger of meaning nothing more than whatever each particular critic wishes it to mean.”¹⁶

The term *intertextualité* has been brought into circulation by J. Kristeva in 1967. She was inspired by M. Bakhtin’s concept of *dialogicité*, which refers not only to literary but also to non–literary voices, to the ‘socio–ideological’ voices of the era. These voices may be heard within a text. Intertextuality means in Kristeva’s proposal that every text is “a mosaic of citations,” and the absorption and transformation of another text.¹⁷

R. Barthes, “the most articulate of all writers on the concept of intertextuality,”¹⁸ went on to give the term an almost all–encompassing philosophical value. He advocated the move from the idea of an identifiable ‘work’ or artefact of an author to the metaphor of the ‘Text’ as a network beyond separate works. This Text is “woven entirely with citations, references, echoes, cultural languages.”¹⁹ This conception of intertextuality implies for Barthes that tracing sources would be an inappropriate form of determination.²⁰

Taken this way intertextuality is a speculative concept and it is difficult to see how this concept can be made practicable in textual studies.²¹ When a theory of intertextuality involves a philosophical perspective, the exegete has to enter a philosophical discussion before he is able to use this approach with sufficient awareness of its implications. K. Nelißen suggests that a hesitancy to do so may be the reason why up until now a large

¹⁴ Dodd, *Scriptures*, 126 (first cursive is Dodd’s, second mine).

¹⁵ Dodd, *Scriptures*, 126 (cursive is Dodd’s)

¹⁶ G. Allen, *Intertextuality* (London: Routledge, 2000) 2.

¹⁷ J. Kristeva, ‘Le mot, le dialogue et le roman,’ in Σημειωτική. *Recherches pour une sémanalyse* (Paris: Seuil, 1969) 143–73, 146.

¹⁸ Allen, *Intertextuality*, 61.

¹⁹ R. Barthes, “From Work to Text,” in *Image–Music–Text* (Oxford: University Press, 1977) 160.

²⁰ R. Barthes, “From Work to Text,” 159–61: “The intertextual in which every text is held ... is not to be confused with some origin of the text: to try to find the ‘sources,’ the ‘influences’ of a work, is to fall in with the myth of filiation” (160).

²¹ E.g. J. Krispenz, *Literarkritik und Stilstatistik im Alten Testament* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2001) 46 says about the position of Kristeva and Barthes: “Damit wird die konkrete, methodisch verantwortete Interpretation eines Einzeltextes unmöglich, denn niemand kann auf das Universum der Texte zurückgreifen.”

part of the exegetes shrinks back from becoming engaged in this approach.²² Others, practitioners of the approach in literary studies²³ and biblical studies²⁴ have chosen a restricted form of intertextuality which makes the concept suitable for the task at hand.

Those who choose a restricted approach assign to the text the centre of attention but recognize the role of the reader. The reader is needed in the first place to discover implicit references in the text.²⁵ Explicit references are provided by the text, but implicit references leave a large share to the interpretative skills of the reader. Characteristic for some other forms of intertextuality is a specific stress on the role of the reader.²⁶ Yet, though the reader is indispensable, a one-sided emphasis on the productive role of the *reader* appears to be the other extreme of the emphasis on the production process in the *writer*, as propagated by Romanticist hermeneutics.²⁷ In the nineteenth century, a considerable part of the interpretation of texts was assigned to retracing the creative process,²⁸ with the ultimate goal of understanding the author better than he understood himself.²⁹ In the later part of the twentieth century the creative role of the reader seems to replace the creative role of the author, when it is said that “in intertextuality a text does not have a meaning. Meaning is assigned to the text by intertextual reading.”³⁰

²² K. Nelißen, “Eine neue Lesebrille für das Alte Testament? Orientierungen für eine Lesart der Bibel in der Postmoderne,” in *Orientierung* 67 (2003) 195–200, 206–10, esp. 209.

²³ E.g. G. Genette, *Palimpsestes: La littérature au second degré* (Paris : Seuil, 1982) 8 explains that, compared to Kristeva’s view of intertextuality: “je le définis pour ma part, d’une manière sans doute restrictive, par une relation de coprésence entre deux ou plusieurs textes, c’est-à-dire, eidétiquement et le plus souvent, par la présence effective d’un texte dans un autre.”

²⁴ E.g. J.Ch. Bastiaens, *Interpretaties van Jesaja 53: Een intertextueel onderzoek naar de lijdende Knecht in Jes 53 (MT/LXX) en in Lk 22:14–38, Hand 3:12–26, Hand 4:23–31 en Hand 8:26–40* (Tilburg: University Press, 1993) 24: “Ons onderzoek kadert in een beperkte intertextualiteitstheorie, d.w.z. dat wij bestuderen hoe een nieuwtestamentische tekst een oudtestamentische tekst opneemt en transformeert.”

²⁵ W. Weren, *Intertekstualiteit en Bijbel* (Kampen: Kok, 1993) 14–5; Bastiaens, *Interpretaties*, 25; Genette, *Palimpsestes*, 16.

²⁶ E.g. E. van Wolde, “Trendy Intertextuality?” in *Intertextuality in Biblical Writings* (ed. S. Draisma; Kampen: Kok, 1989) 43–49, 47: “meaning is not so much a product of the writer, as the result of a process of interaction between text and reader.”

²⁷ Cf. H.-G. Gadamer, *Wahrheit und Methode* (4th ed.; Tübingen: Mohr, 1975) 162–85.

²⁸ E.g. H. Steinthal, “Die Arten und Formen der Interpretation,” (1878) in *Seminar: Philosophische Hermeneutik* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1976) 177 about a text: “die Genesis desselben soll begriffen, der Schöpfungsakt selbst als solcher, der innere Hergang, in welchem das Bild erwuchs, soll durch die psychologische Deutung verstanden werden.”

²⁹ Schleiermacher’s dictum, repeated by W. Dilthey: “Das letzte Ziel des hermeneutischen Verfahrens ist, den Autor besser zu verstehen, als er sich selber verstanden hat”, in his essay “Die Entstehung der Hermeneutik” (1900) in *Gesammelte Schriften* 5 (Leipzig: Teubner, 1924) 317–31, esp. 331.

³⁰ W.S. Vorster, “Intertextuality and Redaktionsgeschichte,” in *Intertextuality in Biblical Writings*, 15–26, 26.

Furthermore, this conception of a ‘text’ is stated to be “something totally different from” the understanding of texts in the method of *Redaktionsgeschichte*.³¹ When such an opposition is created between intertextuality and other approaches, it should not be surprising that many exegetes do not consider intertextuality to be a viable avenue in biblical studies. A reserved attitude towards intertextuality is also evident in a number of recent studies on the role of Scripture in the letters of Paul. The term intertextuality is avoided, while the subject matter and method are not very far removed from it.³²

In this study intertextuality is taken in a *literary* sense, which is a restricted sense compared with the wider horizon of speculative intertextual theory. Intertextuality is in the first place a literary *phenomenon* – the phenomenon that texts have absorbed parts of other texts – and in the second place the *approach* that explores this phenomenon. We believe this approach offers a significant contribution to the interpretation of New Testament writings. Even though the textual character of the approach itself gives a prominent place to the synchronic dimension, the diachronic dimension is by no means excluded. In this study the historical context of 1 Cor 1–4 with respect to the theme of wisdom, will play an important role. This intertextual approach is compatible with literary–historical approaches.³³

3. Intertextuality as a literary phenomenon

To illumine the phenomenon of intertextuality, it is worthwhile to look at the practice and theory of the poet and critic T.S. Eliot. Even though he does not employ the term ‘intertextuality’ – Kristeva is the first to do so – his thoughts on relationships between texts have been seminal during the twentieth century.³⁴ Eliot can be seen as a precursor in this area. Of interest are his ideas about tradition and especially about allusion.

Tradition

In his early essay “Tradition and the Individual Talent” (1919) Eliot challenges the common opinion that what is most to be valued in the work of a poet are those aspects in

³¹ Vorster, “Intertextuality,” 26.

³² E.g. B. S. Rosner, *Paul, Scripture and Ethics: A Study of 1 Corinthians 5–7* (Leiden: Brill, 1994); F. Wilk, *Die Bedeutung des Jesajabuches für Paulus* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1998); H.H.D. Williams, *The Wisdom of the Wise: The Presence and Function of Scripture within 1 Cor. 1:18–3:23* (Leiden: Brill, 2001); Wagner, *Heralds*.

³³ Cf. Bastiaens, *Interpretaties van Jesaja 53, 25*; J.T.A.G.M. van Ruiten, *Een Begin zonder Einde: De doorwerking van Jesaja 65:17 in de intertestamentaire literatuur en het Nieuwe Testament* (Sliedrecht: Merweboek, 1990), who speaks of ‘diachronic intertextuality’ (25).

³⁴ While Bakhtin included all socio-ideological voices, Eliot confines these voices to texts; while Bakhtin confined himself to the synchronic level, Eliot observed the diachronic relationship between texts (M. Pfister, “Konzepte der Intertekstualität,” in *Intertekstualität. Formen, Funktionen, anglistische Fallstudien*. (ed. U. Broich and M. Pfister; Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1985) 5.

which he least resembles anyone else, by stating: “We shall often find that not only the best, but the most individual parts of his work may be those in which the dead poets, his ancestors, assert their immortality most vigorously.”³⁵ Eliot advocated a shift in critical and public opinion away from the Romantic idea of a work of art as the expression of an author’s personality towards a new emphasis on the author’s dependency on tradition.

In his study of the function of tradition within Israel’s Scripture M. Fishbane, expresses his findings in terms which come close to the abovementioned ideas of Eliot.³⁶ While the tradition-historical approach of Von Rad and others searches for oral sources behind the text, Fishbane investigates the way written traditions are used in later texts.³⁷ He believes that in later Hebrew biblical texts “all significant speech is scriptural or scripturally oriented speech.”³⁸ In these later texts tradition is more important than ‘individual talent,’ which may be understood as the talent of an individual as well as that of a school.³⁹ Historical circumstances also play a role because new situations or crises call for the collapse of older textual boundaries and bring to view the complex intertextuality of the culture.⁴⁰ From the apostle Paul’s point of view, a crisis took place with the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and these events brought about an avalanche in his understanding of Scripture. Paul writes his letters after events that changed and upset his former way of reading Scripture. Here we move beyond Fishbane who does not include the New Testament in his understanding of ‘inner-biblical exegesis.’⁴¹

Allusion

Another concept which plays a large role in T.S. Eliot’s work is *allusion*. In his view “mature poets steal.”⁴² While “immature poets imitate” and repeat what they have found, mature poets steal to make something new: “The good poet welds his theft into a whole of feeling which is unique, utterly different from that from which it was torn.”⁴³ J. Longenbach observes that in Eliot’s earlier poems allusions do their work in hidden ways. They form “an inexplicable under-pattern” or a “hidden logic that we do not yet

³⁵ T.S. Eliot, *Selected Essays* (London: Faber & Faber, 1932) 14; cf. also: “The poet’s mind is in fact a receptacle for seizing and storing up numberless feelings, phrases, images which remain there until all the particles which can unite to form a new compound are present together” (19).

³⁶ M. Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985).

³⁷ Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation*, 7.

³⁸ M. Fishbane, “Inner-Biblical Exegesis: Types and Strategies of Interpretation in Ancient Israel,” in *The Garments of Torah* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989) 16.

³⁹ Fishbane, “Inner-Biblical Exegesis,” 17, “Tradition is the warp and woof of creative talent.”

⁴⁰ Fishbane, “Inner-Biblical Exegesis,” 16.

⁴¹ For Fishbane the Gospels and the Pauline letters do not belong to inner-biblical exegesis because “the dominant thrust” of the New Testament documents “with respect to the Hebrew Bible is their proclamation that they have fulfilled or superseded the ancient Israelite *traditum*. Theirs is an innovative *traditio*, continuous with the Hebrew Bible but decidedly something new, something not ‘biblical’ – if we may use that word for the moment as indicating the ancient Israelite *traditum*.” (*Biblical Interpretation*, 10).

⁴² Eliot, T.S. “Philip Massinger,” in *Elisabethan Dramatists* (London: Faber & Faber, 1962) 135.

⁴³ Eliot, “Philip Massinger,” 136.

understand.”⁴⁴ This hidden logic of allusion is powerfully present in ‘The Waste Land,’ to which M. Pfister refers as a supreme example of the phenomenon of intertextuality.⁴⁵

There is a peculiar ambiguous attitude towards explicit citations in ‘The Waste Land.’ The Notes appended at the end disclose some of the texts from which phrases, lines, or ideas originate. If readers should take the Notes as simple explanations, comparable to dictionary entries that explain the meaning of a word or phrase, they may satisfy their curiosity but will gain little in understanding the poem. Revealing only takes place when the references are perceived in an *intertextual* sense: they do not just refer to a place where the phrase is found, but point to a literary context that serves as a foil to the target text. One may think that the evocative power of the poem suffers when its ‘sources’ are known, but the opposite is the case. The explicit references generate intertextual patterns so that the text becomes deeper and richer in meaning. We need both ‘tradition’ and ‘allusion’. Tradition stands for the pretext(s) and allusion represents the dialogical process between text and pretext.⁴⁶

4. Intertextuality in New Testament studies

W. Weren has developed a model to investigate intertextual relations between New Testament texts and Old Testament pre-texts. I summarize this model in the form of five areas of attention:

Retracing citations

Explicit citations⁴⁷ are the starting point for intertextual study. A citation is explicit when it is accompanied by an introductory formula and when it can be retraced with certainty because it contains at least a small number of words in common with the pre-text. Implicit citations are not marked in the text but need to be discovered by the reader. In

⁴⁴ J. Longenbach, “Mature poets steal,” in *The Cambridge Companion to T.S.Eliot* (ed. A.D. Moody; Cambridge: University Press, 1994) 176–88, 184.

⁴⁵ Pfister, “Konzepte,” 28–9.

⁴⁶ A concise presentation of an intertextual procedure in literary studies has been given by Z. Ben-Porat. Ben-Porat uses the term *allusion* in a broad sense and speaks of the Alluding Text (AT) and the Referent Text (RT, or: the evoked text or source text). An allusion is indicated by a *marker* (*mr*), referring to marked elements (*md*) in RT (only in an exact quotation are *mr* and *md* identical). The marker in AT is the centre of a Local Interpretation (LI). The *md* in the RT also has a Local Interpretation (LI₁), which differs from LI, because of its different context. The activation of intertextual patterning between the two texts results in a modified local interpretation (LI₂) and a fuller interpretation in AT. Finally, the activation of the whole RT may result in more intertextual patterns shared by AT and RT, in addition to the intertextual pattern between *mr* and *md* (Z. Ben-Porat, “The Poetics of Literary Allusion,” in *PTL: A Journal for Descriptive Poetics and Theory of Literature* 1 [1976] 105–280).

⁴⁷ I make no distinction between citations and quotations. Usually the two terms are used as synonyms.

the past citations have received a good deal of attention in New Testament studies, but this research was concerned with a) the wording, b) the Greek or Hebrew version of origin or c) the *new* context of quotations. Generally speaking, the *original* context of the citation has been left out of consideration. This lack in biblical studies may be remedied by an intertextual approach. Here a citation is not thought of as a self-contained unit, injected into the new text and cut off from earlier connections, but as a sign: “Explicit citations function as a powerful signal that the text must be read in the light of an earlier text.”⁴⁸ An explicit citation is like the tip of an iceberg.⁴⁹ We may use another metaphor: a quotation is like an ambassador, who does not only present himself but represents a foreign body and has come to establish links.

Defining segments

The relevant context of the quotation in the New Testament and the relevant context in the original text need to be defined. These contexts will have at least the size of a pericope.⁵⁰ For the purpose of comparison, NT-text and OT-pretext need to be textual units.⁵¹ The study of OT-pre-texts may also reckon with the interesting phenomenon that quotations from the Septuagint are related to a pre-text in Hebrew and that quotations from a Hebrew text are likely to have been influenced by Greek translations. Subtle or less subtle semantic shifts have taken place in the transition from Hebrew to Greek. It is also possible that the Greek (LXX) pre-text differs in extent from the Hebrew (MT) version.

There are two ways of proceeding in intertextual studies.⁵² In order to discover interconnections one may start with an analysis of the earlier text and then move on to later texts.⁵³ One may also start with the later text and move backward to one or more pre-texts. The latter procedure will be followed in this study. By first presenting in part II

⁴⁸ W. Weren, “Jesus’ Entry in Jerusalem,” in *The Scriptures and the Gospels* (ed. C.M. Tuckett; Leuven: Peeters, 1997) 123. The function of quotations in pointing to earlier (OT-) texts has been recognized before, e.g. in studies on Mark, cf. H.C. Kee, “The Function of Scriptural Quotations and Allusions in Mark 11–16,” in *Jesus und Paulus* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1975) 165–88 and R.Meye, “Psalm 107 as “Horizon” for Interpreting the Miracle Stories of Mark 4:35–8:26,” in *Unity and Diversity in New Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978) 1–13.

⁴⁹ W. Weren, *Intertextualiteit en Bijbel* (Kampen: Kok, 1993) 23.

⁵⁰ W. Weren, *Windows on Jesus* (London: SCM Press, 1999) 199.

⁵¹ A contextual approach to the study of LXX (Isaiah) is also advocated by A. v.d.Kooij: “In view of the scribal and reading practices in antiquity the analysis aimed at is not on the level of a single word, or verse, but on that of a *passage*, a pericope or chapter, in LXX (and MT) as a whole” (*The Oracle of Tyre: The Septuagint of Isaiah XXIII as Version and Vision* [Leiden: Brill, 1998] 15). We may also think here of Jewish synagogue practice: the Torah was divided in *sedarim* and the prophets were read (cf. Luke 4:17, Acts 13:15) according to *haffarot*. Expressions like “in the book of Moses *on the burning bush*” (Mark 12:26) and “what scripture says *in Elijah*” (Rom 11:2) indicate that scripture was known passage-wise.

⁵² Weren, *Windows*, 198.

⁵³ Thus J. van Ruiten, *Een begin*, and J.C. Bastiaens, *Interpretaties*.

an analysis of the New Testament letter section in its own right from different angles – textual, historical, rhetorical, and thematic – it will be easier to judge in part III whether the Old Testament truly contributes to the understanding of the section.

Interaction

A) Interaction pertains to quotations: An explicit citation “acquires a new meaning and a new function within the text into which it is now integrated, but it will nonetheless continue to refer back to the inherent semantic configuration of the original text.”⁵⁴ There is interaction between the words of a quotation in the pre-text and the same words (with changed meanings) in the new text.

B) Interaction may be expected between the original context of the quotation and its new context. In the vicinity of the quotation other, more hidden, references to the pre-text are likely to linger. A quotation brings about an interplay or reciprocal effect between the Old Testament text from which it comes and the New Testament text into which it is integrated.⁵⁵ This interplay is initiated and coordinated by the quotation, which functions like a linchpin between the texts. While having become part of a new context the citation continues to refer to its original context.

C) When two or more explicit or implicit quotations feature close to each other in a text, we may consider whether links are affirmed or established between the pre-texts of these neighbouring quotations. Kee observed that both in Qumran and in Mark Scripture texts were juxtaposed “that in their origin had little or nothing to do with each other, but which in the hands of the exegete are shown to be mutually illuminating and to give rise to theological perceptions that were not anticipated in any of the original components.”⁵⁶

Transformations

The dynamic character of intertextuality resides in the dialogical relationship of text and pretext(s). There is a conversation going on with question and answer, affirmation and negation, qualification and extension. There is continuity and discontinuity in the relationship between text and pretext. “Intertextual study looks for both similarities (intertextemes) and differences (transformations) between two or more literary units.”⁵⁷ In the case of mere repetition the intertextual value is small but deviation calls for special attention. When a text is used against the grain of the original context, an unexpected dialogue is broached between the new and the original context. When there is both

⁵⁴ Weren, “Jesus’ Entry,” 123.

⁵⁵ Weren, *Windows*, 203.

⁵⁶ Kee, “The Function of Quotations,” 181. M. Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation*, 399–404 refers to the rabbinic exegetical technique of ‘conjunctions,’ whereby the contiguity of words or pericopes invites interpretation of the one (word/verse/pericope) in the light of the other. For example, titles of the Psalms may “provide an exegetical bridge between two textual units – a psalm and a narrative – and thus (...) two disparate contexts are synoptically brought into association” (404).

⁵⁷ Weren, *Intertekstualiteit*, 23.

attachment and detachment in relation to the original context, this dialogical relationship brings about an optimum in intertextuality.⁵⁸

Structure

Intertextuality is not only interested in the reproduction of elements but also in the reproduction of structures.⁵⁹ Discovering the structure of a text and its patterns requires intensive reading. Only after achieving a picture of the syntactic and semantic structure of text and pre-text apart from each other, can the structures of the texts be compared with each other.⁶⁰ Structural comparison as part of intertextual study may offer more than has been realized thus far.⁶¹

5. Intertextuality in the Pauline letters

After presenting the basic aspects of intertextual analysis, we need to face the situation that there is still much disagreement about the legitimacy and value of this approach. Those who are convinced that the New Testament authors used Scripture in an atomistic fashion, point to the fact that quotations from the Old Testament serve as an appeal to authority and argue that this makes the literary phenomenon of intertextuality irrelevant.⁶² However, one would think that the appeal to authority does not so much concern ‘proof-texts’ but the ‘Scriptures’ in a more general sense. Isolated texts do not have authority in themselves, but only because they are seen as part of Scripture.⁶³

⁵⁸ Pfister, “Konzepte,” 29. This may be illustrated with two examples of transformation in Paul’s letters: Rom 9:25 in relation to Hos 2:25 and Gal 3:16 in relation to Gen 13:15. While in Hosea ‘my people’ refers to Israel, the expression is made to refer in Paul’s letter to Gentiles. In Galatians Paul interprets Abraham’s ‘seed’ in the singular as referring to Christ.

⁵⁹ Cf. W. Karrer, “Intertekstualität als Elementen- und Struktur-Reproduktion,” in *Intertekstualität* (ed. U. Broich and M. Pfister; Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1985) 98–116.

⁶⁰ Weren, *Intertekstualiteit*, 13.

⁶¹ For example, 1 Cor 2:16 quotes LXX Isa 40:13 and M. Dijkstra (“Lawsuit, Debate and Wisdom Discourse in Second Isaiah” in *Studies in the Book of Isaiah* [Leuven: University Press, 1997] 258) considers Isa 40:12–31 to be “a fine specimen of wisdom discourse,” a poem “deeply influenced by wisdom vocabulary and its lines of reasoning.” When in wisdom discourse, “series of rhetorical questions often alternate with affirmative speech” and these questions contain some irony, a comparison with Paul’s line of reasoning (‘wisdom discourse?’) in 1 Cor 1–4 does not seem farfetched at all. Rhetorical questions are interspersed in the argument (e.g. 1:13, 20; 2:11, 16; 3:3–5a, 16; 4:8, 21). There is throughout the argument under or just above the surface a certain style of irony (e.g. 1:21, 25; 3:17, 4:8). Could it be that Paul’s so-called rhetorical discourse finds its patterns in the Old Testament, even more than in the rhetorical training of his own day? (cf. K. Elliger, *Deuteriojesaja*, 44–5).

⁶² M. Rese, “Intertekstualität – Ein Beispiel für Sinn und Unsinn ‘neuer’ Methoden,” in *The Scriptures and the Gospels* (ed. C. M. Tuckett; Leuven: University Press, 1997) 438.

⁶³ Cf. Doeve, *Jewish Hermeneutics*, 115.

We have to move from a theoretical discussion to putting intertextual analysis to the test. This has been undertaken by W. Weren in several studies on the gospels and Acts⁶⁴, by J. van Ruiten⁶⁵, J. Bastiaens⁶⁶ and by S. Moyise on Revelation.⁶⁷ The seminal book by Hays (*Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*)⁶⁸ explores the phenomenon in Paul and discusses a number of passages that clearly have intertextual significance. With less emphasis on the literary aspect the thorough studies of Wilk⁶⁹ and Wagner⁷⁰ also break new ground. Other studies that scrutinize the role of Scripture in Paul's letters pay less attention to the original context of the quotations and can therefore hardly be called 'intertextual.'⁷¹ This is also true for the work of Williams on 1 Cor 1-3 and Rosner on 1 Cor 5-7.⁷² Consequently, the question needs to be asked: Are the procedures of contemporary literary theory suitable for the analysis of biblical texts? Ought these texts not to be studied strictly in the light of literary conventions of their own time and place?⁷³ In answer, we point out that important conditions for the occurrence of intertextuality are met in the case of the Pauline letters:

1. **Continuity:** In the case of biblical studies we are not dealing with – in the terminology of Ben-Porat – texts that, beyond the presence of a marker, are unrelated. New Testament writings stand in the tradition of the Old Testament

⁶⁴ See the studies collected in *Intertextualiteit en Bijbel* as well as: "Quotations from Isaiah and Matthew's Christology," in *Studies in the Book of Isaiah*, 447-465; "The Use of Isaiah 5:1-7 in the Parable of the Tenants," *Biblica* 79 (1998), 1-26; *Windows on Jesus*, 197-215.

⁶⁵ Van Ruiten, *Begin*.

⁶⁶ Bastiaens, *Interpretaties*.

⁶⁷ S. Moyise, *The Old Testament in the Book of Revelation* (Sheffield: Sheffield University Press, 1995) and S. Moyise, "Intertextuality and the Study of the Old Testament in the New," in *The Old Testament in the New: Essays in honour of J.L. North* (ed. S. Moyise; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000) 14-41. Cf. also R. Bauckham, *The Climax of Prophecy. Studies on the Book of Revelation* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1993) xi-x: "The pattern of almost continuous allusion to the Old Testament throughout the book is not a haphazard use of Old Testament language by a writer so soaked in the Old Testament that he naturally uses its language, as some scholars have mistakenly thought. It is a pattern of disciplined and deliberate *allusion* to specific Old Testament texts (...) Allusions are meant to recall the Old Testament context, which thereby becomes part of the meaning the Apocalypse conveys."

⁶⁸ R.B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989).

⁶⁹ Wilk, *Bedeutung*. Wilk does not discuss intertextuality, even though his findings are valuable for intertextual reading.

⁷⁰ Wagner, *Heralds*.

⁷¹ See esp. the recent voluminous work: Beale, G.K. and D.A. Carson, eds. *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007) with studies on Romans (M. Seifrid), 1 Corinthians (R.E. Ciampa and B.S. Rosner), 2 Corinthians (P. Balla), Galatians and Philippians (M. Silva), and 1-2 Thessalonians (J.A.D. Weima).

⁷² Williams, *Wisdom*, and B.S. Rosner, *Paul, Scripture and Ethics. A Study of 1 Corinthians 5-7* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999).

⁷³ Weren, *Intertekstualiteit*, 19.

Scriptures. They are already related texts, “characterized by shared world components.”⁷⁴

2. **Discontinuity:** A crisis within biblical tradition calls for adaptation and renewal.⁷⁵ In the letters of Paul the Christ event is nothing less than such a crisis. As a result, we may expect new intertextual readings in these letters. Even in the case of Matthew who would be the first to adhere to the Scriptures, U. Luz concludes: “In my opinion it is not possible to speak about a continuing process of biblical tradition that links the Bible and Matthew ... such continuity is eclipsed by his adoption of a new foundational story ... the story of Jesus.”⁷⁶
3. **Availability and Relevance:** In our modern historically conscious age we tend to focus on biblical tradition as an ongoing historical process and we are acutely aware of a historical distance between the text and the present. But these ideas of historical process and historical distance are largely foreign to the New Testament authors. An intertextual approach may very well be closer to the way the biblical text was experienced than a tradition-historical approach. Of interest here is Hays’ insight of a “master hermeneutical trope that governs all the intertextual interplay of Paul’s letters,”⁷⁷ summarized by the citation “*the word is near you*, in your mouth and in your heart” (Rom 10:8). For Hays this ‘trope’ is the key to understanding Paul’s use of Scripture. It means that “the word of Scripture is read as the word of God to us.” The nearness of Scripture is supported by Paul’s own remarks on the function of Scripture. Rom 4:23–24 and 15:4, 1 Cor 9:10 and 10:11 emphasize that Scripture was “written for us,” concerns us and speaks directly into the present.⁷⁸ Consequently it appears that the dynamic and dialogical character of intertextuality applies to the letters of Paul.

⁷⁴ Ben-Porat, “*Allusion*,” 117.

⁷⁵ Fishbane, “Inner-biblical exegesis,” 16.

⁷⁶ “Even though Matthew borrows basic structures from biblical literature in order to construct his own book as a ‘new Genesis,’” U. Luz, “Intertexts in the Gospel of Matthew,” *HTR* 97:2 (2004) 119–37.

⁷⁷ Hays, *Echoes*, 167. Hays was inspired by J. Hollander’s *The Figure of Echo* (1981) and believed that the literary critic’s ‘hearing aid’ could “disclose important elements of Paul’s thought that have been left unexplored by other critical methods.” *Echo* is the word for what is heard by the critic’s ear. It needs to be clarified that Hays gives two different meanings to the word. The first meaning is a finer and often fainter recollection of a previous text than both quotation and allusion offer. Viewed this way ‘echo’ is situated at the one end of a spectrum which has the explicit quotation at its other end (*Echoes*, 23). The second meaning of *echo* in Hays’ book is the whole dynamic field of resonances between two texts (*Echoes*, 20, *passim*). Conceived this way echo is *the* literary trope for intertextuality.

⁷⁸ Cf. also D.-A. Koch, *Die Schrift als Zeuge des Evangeliums* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1986) 327, and Conzelmann 61: “Der Gott des AT’s spricht durch dieses Buch heute unmittelbar.” H. Hübner, “Intertextualität – die hermeneutische Strategie des Paulus,” *TLZ* 116 (1991) 894, comments on this trope: “Dem is voll zuzustimmen! Damit hat Hays den zentralen Sachverhalt der paulinischen Hermeneutik klar und zutreffend umrissen.”

At this point the question still remains whether it is legitimate to attribute a role to the context of the Scripture citations. Even today the relevance of the original context of citations on the Pauline text is still very much in doubt among most exegetes. W. Schrage, for example, states that Paul may take sentences and phrases carefree out of their context and give them irrespective of their original sense a new meaning.⁷⁹ H. Hübner in his *Theologie des Neuen Testaments* says that even though the OT context ought to be considered, it should be taken into account that Paul ignored this context when it did not suit his theological intentions.⁸⁰

Yet other views are also voiced. Wilk concludes that Paul hears and heeds in every single case – even though with different degrees of intensity – the relevant Isaianic context.⁸¹ This is relevant for our study of 1 Cor 1–4, because most OT-quotations in these chapters are from the book of Isaiah. The other prophetic book quoted in 1 Cor 1–4 is Jeremiah. G. O’Day has studied the quotation in 1 Cor 1:31 and concludes: “In Paul’s use of Jer 9:22–23 we thus see intertextuality at its fullest. Paul both makes explicit reference to the received text and interweaves it thoroughly into the fabric of his new text. The intertextual relationship between Jer 9:22–23 and 1 Cor 1:26–31 is thus evidenced in verbal parallels, but also in structural and substantive theological parallels.”⁸² With respect to the remaining two quotations from Job and the Psalms in 1 Cor 3, H. von Lips remarks that the context of the quotations may very well have influenced Paul.⁸³ Collins observes in his commentary: “Paul’s scriptural argument normally does not cite the Scriptures merely as proof texts, nor does he do so for the sake of literary embellishment. When Paul cites biblical passages he evokes the entire context to which they refer.”⁸⁴

An objection posed against intertextual reading concerns the assumed lack of familiarity with Scripture among the letter’s audience. If the majority of the church members were Gentile in origin, as probably was the case in Corinth, they would not

⁷⁹ Schrage 175. Schrage takes this to be a common procedure among Paul’s contemporaries. The apostle only differs from them in that he comes to the new meaning on account of the cross event. Differently Thiselton 161: Paul “usually takes note of the original context.”

⁸⁰ H. Hübner, *Biblische Theologie des Neuen Testaments: Band 2: Die Theologie des Paulus* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993) 118.

⁸¹ Wilk, *Bedeutung*: “Paulus verwendet in seinen Briefen eine Fülle von Jesajaworten – teils als Zitate, teils in Form von Anspielungen. Die Art der Verwendung läßt jeweils ein in sich schlüssiges Verständnis der betroffenen Jesajaworte erkennen. Zudem berücksichtigt und rezipiert er in jedem Einzelfall – wenn auch in unterschiedlicher Intensität – den zugehörigen jesajanischen Kontext. Zitate und Anspielungen basieren also jeweils auf einer spezifischen Deutung von kleineren, bisweilen auch recht umfangreichen Passagen des Jesajabuches” (340).

⁸² G.R. O’Day, “Jeremiah 9:22–23 and 1 Corinthians 1:26–31 – A Study in Intertextuality,” *JBL* 109/2 (1990) 267.

⁸³ H. von Lips, *Weisheitliche Traditionen im Neuen Testament* (Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 1990) 328: “Es könnte also für Paulus beim Zitieren aus Hiob auch der dortige Kontext präsent gewesen sein. ... Ähnliches gilt für das Zitat aus Ps 93,11 LXX in 1 Kor 3,20. ... So beinhaltet auch hier der Kontext mehr Berührungen zu den paulinischen Aussagen als das Zitat selbst erkennen läßt.”

⁸⁴ Collins 96.

share the Jewish heritage. Accordingly, some argue that the context of the quotations from the Old Testament writings must be irrelevant, because the first hearers were unaware of it. However, in the first place, the awareness of the first hearers is not the limit of the meaning of the text. In the second place, Gentiles were not necessarily uneducated in relation to the Jewish Scriptures. The Diaspora synagogues were not only of central importance for the Jews, but also had an influence on Gentile Christians, because many were adherents who already visited the synagogue, and because the early church gatherings tended to follow the pattern of the synagogue service. Fisk showed the plausibility of a significant influence of the synagogue on the knowledge of Scripture in the churches of Rome.⁸⁵ The same applies no less to Corinth.⁸⁶

Paul used Scripture extensively in his letter to the Romans but he had not personally visited the capital city. Yet in Corinth he had spent considerable time teaching, according to Acts 18:11, 18).⁸⁷ In the synagogue at that time Scripture was read, not only the Law but also the Prophets. The synagogue service in the middle of the first century C.E. included the reading of the Torah and passages from the Prophets.⁸⁸ According to Lindemann, the use of Scripture in First Corinthians shows that no difference is made between Jewish Christians, who had always lived with the Bible, and Gentile Christians, who had come to know the Bible only recently as a 'Christian text.' The letter presupposes that all readers were familiar with the biblical tradition.⁸⁹

⁸⁵ B.N. Fisk, "Synagogue Influence and Scriptural Knowledge among the Christians in Rome," in *As It Is Written. Studying Paul's Use of Scripture* (ed. S.E. Porter and C.D. Stanley; Atlanta: SBL, 2008) 157–85.

⁸⁶ Cf. Fitzmyer 31, who refers to Acts 18:4, 1 Macc 15:23 (mentioning a Jewish settlement at Sicyon near Corinth), Philo's remark on Jewish colonies, mentioning Corinth (*Legat.* 181), and the Corinthian inscription 'synagogue of Hebrews,' even though this inscription dates from the 2nd century C.E. (Fitzmyer 31; Collins 22).

⁸⁷ There are some suggestive remarks in Acts 18:7 about Titius Justus, a representative of Luke's undisclosed category of the *σεβομένοι τὸν θεόν* (probably Gentiles drawn to the Jewish way of worship). Paul moved to his house that is said to be *συνομοποῦσα τῇ συναγωγῇ* (Cf. B.J. Koet, "As Close to the Synagogue as Can Be. Paul in Corinth (Acts 18:1–18)," in *The Corinthian Correspondence* [ed. R. Bieringer; Leuven: Peeters, 1996] 397–415), attaching significance to Luke's use of the rare word *συνομοποῦσα*: "Luke seems to invent a new word-combination to show Paul's closeness to the synagogue" (409, n. 50).

⁸⁸ Cf. C. Perrot, "The Reading of the Bible in the Ancient Synagogue," in *Mikra*, 137–59, who notes about variety that in Qumran, as the *pesharim* show, the Prophets were read for their own sake while in Pharisee synagogues only selected passages from the prophets were read in conjunction with the Torah (152–3).

⁸⁹ A. Lindemann, "Die Schrift als Tradition. Beobachtungen zu den biblischen Zitaten im Erster Korintherbrief," in *Schrift als Tradition. FS Josef Ernst* (ed. K. Backhaus and F.G. Untergassmaier; Paderborn: Schöningh, 1996) 225.

PART II: 1 CORINTHIANS 1-4

After the introductory part, Part II of this study offers a linguistic/semantic (Ch. 3), rhetorical (Ch. 4), and thematic analysis (Ch. 5) of the text of 1 Corinthians 1-4, followed by a discussion of its religious-historical context (Ch. 6). Before we move to an intertextual analysis and look for the connections between Old Testament passages and 1 Cor 1-4 in part III, we will analyze the text of 1 Cor 1-4. It is important first to establish an understanding of the meaning of significant terms, of syntactical patterns, and of the flow of the argument. Chapter 3 contains a translation with notes and chapter 4 presents a rhetorical structure that seeks to do justice to the successive pericopes of 1 Cor 1-4. We will find that Paul's argument takes its starting point in 1:17-18 and that it is particularly concerned with a right understanding of wisdom. Chapter 5 explores the various themes that play a role in our text and arrives at the conclusion that not only from a rhetorical but also from a thematic point of view the most central and overarching subject is WISDOM.

Because the apostle does not concern himself with wisdom elsewhere in his letters, there needs to be little doubt that this subject has been occasioned by the situation in Corinth. This brings us back to the religious-historical question why the Corinthians put such a high premium on wisdom and what the influences were that made themselves felt in their community. After a Gnostic origin of Corinthian wisdom has been discarded, chapter 6 argues that the most likely influence in the area of wisdom was Hellenistic Judaism, exemplified in the writings of Philo. These considerations will provide our textual study with historical bearings. With regard to the letter's *Sitz im Leben*, we will compare the letter writing practice of the author with the habits of classical rhetoric in chapter 5 and take into account the religious situation of the recipients of the letter in chapter 6. Part II is not to be read as a continuous argument in which one chapter neatly builds on the preceding chapter. Instead, the chapters represent separate building blocks that can be arranged in various ways. Together they are meant to contribute to a better understanding of the multi-faceted section 1 Cor 1-4.

Chapter 3: Text

Translation

1:1 From Paul, called as apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Sosthenes, the brother,

1:2 to the church of God that is in Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling,

with all those who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours.¹

1:3 Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

1:4 I thank my God always for you because of the grace of God given² to you in Christ Jesus.

1:5 For you were made rich in every respect in him, in all speech and all knowledge³ –

1:6 just as the testimony about Christ has been confirmed among you –

1:7 so that you do not lack any spiritual gift as you wait for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ,

1:8 who will also confirm you to the end⁴, so that you will be guiltless⁵ on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1:9 God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

1:10 I urge⁶ you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,

¹ The word order suggests that αὐτῶν καὶ ἡμῶν belongs to τόπος, but to connect the phrase with κύριος gives a more natural sense and may function as a critical reminder to the Corinthians, who “think and act as if they had a monopoly on Christ and the Spirit” (Thiselton 78). The emphatic phrase ἐν παντὶ τόπῳ on the universal nature of the worship of Christ needs to follow immediately after “with all those who call on the name of the Lord.” Consequently, αὐτῶν καὶ ἡμῶν ended up in final position.

² The several passive verbs in 1:4–9 (δοθείση 1:4, ἐπλουτίσθητε 1:5, ἐβεβαιώθη 1:6, and ἐκλήθητε 1:9) are *passiva divina*, which emphasize divine activity in the church, but their past tense may suggest a temporal distance between the time of giving and the present situation. The present time occurs only in μὴ ὑστερεῖσθαι (1:7).

³ Ἐν παντὶ λόγῳ καὶ πάσῃ γνώσει is a hyperbolic manner of speech (Weiss 7), in which ἐν παντὶ λόγῳ seems to refer to the many forms of expression given by the Spirit (cf. 12:8, 14:26) and (ἐν) πάσῃ γνώσει probably indicates knowledge of the consequences of God’s saving acts in Christ (Schrage 116).

⁴ The translation of ἕως τέλους in the temporal sense ‘to the end’ (Weiss 10; Lietzmann 6; Conzelmann 47) is preferable to the intensive meaning ‘completely’ (R. Baumann, *Mitte und Norm des Christlichen. Eine Auslegung von 1 Korinter 1,1–3,4* [Münster: Aschendorff, 1968] 41) because the expression “clearly corresponds to ‘the day of our Lord Jesus Christ’” (Thiselton 101) and accentuates “the eschatological-apocalyptic tendency” (Lindemann 31).

⁵ Ἀνεγκλητος is a legal term: ‘free from any charge’ (Schnabel 76; Thiselton 102).

that all of you agree in what you say⁷ and that there be no divisions among you, rather,⁸ be restored⁹ in the same mind and the same conviction.

1:11 For information has reached me concerning you, my brothers and sisters, from members of Chloe's household, that there are quarrels among you.

1:12 Now I mean this, that each of you is saying,¹⁰

"I belong to Paul," or "I belong to Apollos," or "I belong to Cephas," or "I belong to Christ."¹¹

1:13 Is Christ divided? Paul was not crucified for you, was he? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?

1:14 I thank God that I did not baptize any of you except Crispus and Gaius,

1:15 so that no one can say that you were baptized in my name!

1:16 Yet I did baptize also the household of Stephanus.

Otherwise, I do not remember whether I baptized anyone else.

1:17 For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel

– not with wisdom of word¹², lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.¹³

⁶ Παρακαλῶ may be used in the non-rhetorical sense 'I ask' (e.g. 1 Tim 2:1), but at this point of transition from the thanksgiving to the main body of the letter the word has the rhetorical sense 'I urge' (cf. 4:16; Thiselton 111–4).

⁷ ἵνα τὸ αὐτὸ λέγητε πάντες, BJ: "ayez tous même langage". In other places Paul calls for τὸ αὐτὸ φρονεῖτε (2 Cor 13:11; Rom 12:16; 15:5; Phil 2:2; 4:2) but the focus in this expression is on speech. Most translations do not mention speech: NIV, NASB, NEB ("agree among yourselves"), NRSV ("that all of you should be in agreement").

⁸ The particle δέ is slightly adversative here (Fee 53).

⁹ In the context 1:4–17 the meaning of the perfect passive subjunctive ἦτε κατηρτισμένοι is one of restoring what threatens to be lost rather than completing what has not yet been achieved, *pace* BDAG, s.v. καταρτίζω, 1b and C.W. Strüder, *Paulus und die Gesinnung Christi* (Leuven: Peeters, 2005) 160 n.90 with "Begonnenes zu Ende zu bringen."

¹⁰ In the exegesis of the early church, the use of the names by Paul in the text was commonly considered a rhetorical device to avoid mentioning the local leaders explicitly. See excursus on 4:6; cf. Bachmann 58–9. M.M. Mitchell, *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation*. (Tübingen: Mohr, 1991) 86, understands the presentation of the slogans as a form of *prosopopoeia* in which the author gives a lively expression to the stance of his opponents to his own advantage. Strictly speaking, we still know nothing about the parties beyond the statement in 1:12 (Lindemann 39).

¹¹ Some, e.g. Meyer 22–7 and Robertson-Plummer 12–3, have held to the existence of a 'Christ party', and looked for support to 2 Cor 10:7. Yet in 1 Corinthians Paul does not mention this faction again. An ironic exclamation by Paul is more likely given the fact that, as Bousset 67 remarks, while we are unaware of it now, Paul could have made his intention clear on paper by e.g. leaving a blank before Ἐγὼ δὲ Χριστοῦ or by using large letters. Moreover this interpretation smoothes the transition to "Is Christ apportioned out?" in verse 13 (cf. Thiselton 129–33; Merklein 146–7).

¹² I take 'wisdom of word' as a wisdom characterized by λόγος (in the form of speech *and* thought). The translation 'eloquent wisdom' (e.g. NRSV: Fitzmyer 3; Schnabel 104: 'gewandte Rede') unduly restricts its meaning to speech (see Chapter 5.3). Better are 'the language of worldly wisdom' (NEB) and 'words of human wisdom' (NIV). The two following studies understand the expression as 'word of wisdom,' which provides a parallel with 'word of the cross' (1:18). F. Wilk, *Die Bedeutung des Jesajabuches für Paulus* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck &

1:18 For the word¹⁴ of the cross is foolishness to those who are being lost,¹⁵
but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.
1:19 For it is written, “I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,
and the cleverness of the clever I will set aside.”
1:20 Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the philosopher¹⁶ of this age?
Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?
1:21 For since in the wisdom of God¹⁷ the world by its wisdom did not know him,

Ruprecht, 1998) 103, n.7 suggested that ἐν σοφίᾳ λόγου should be understood as ἐν σοφῶι λόγῳ in alignment with Hebrew syntax, where the genitive often has the value of an adjective (cf. BDR §165.2). Kammler argues that the formula ἐν σοφίᾳ λόγου can be interpreted as a *hypallage*, resulting in the meaning ἐν λόγῳ σοφίας, with σοφία in the position of *nomen regens* to give the word emphasis (H.-C. Kammler, *Kreuz und Weisheit: Eine exegetische Untersuchung zu 1 Kor 1,10-3,4* [Tübingen: Mohr, 2003] 32). However, these interpretations would require a less common exchange of places between the *nomen regens* and the *nomen rectum*. Instead, ἐν λογικῇ σοφίᾳ would be more likely as meaning. Yet λόγου and λογικῇ do not quite agree in sense and the attributive genitive (λόγου) is more emphatic than the attributive adjective (λογικῇ) would be (cf. Wallace 87). The Corinthians knew better than we do what Paul meant with σοφία λόγου. Were they, perhaps, impressed by the Philonic idea of λόγος?

¹³ The added explication ‘of its power’ (NRSV, NIV) after ‘be emptied’ is in agreement with the context: ‘the word of the cross’ is meant to be δύναμις θεοῦ (1:18b) in order to ‘save those who believe’ (1:21b). Still the aspect of ‘emptied of its content’ may be present as well. Effect and content can not be isolated from each other as is seen in 1:24: ‘Christ crucified’ is both ‘the power of God’ and ‘the wisdom of God’.

¹⁴ Λόγος in λόγος τοῦ σταυροῦ is translated as ‘word’, but should not be understood as just a ‘short statement’ or even simply ‘message’. We prefer to understand λόγος in the biblical sense of ‘proclamation’ (with Thiselton 153; cf. 2 Cor 5:19) because the interchangeability with κήρυγμα is apparent in 1:21b and in the hendiadys in 2:4: ὁ λόγος μου καὶ τὸ κήρυγμά μου. This brings on the one hand Paul’s ‘word of the cross’ in the vicinity of the word of the prophets. On the other hand, in a Hellenistic atmosphere λόγος may have the more Greek sense of ‘narrative’ (LSJ, s.v., V). The two senses complement each other. Paul’s description of his preaching in Gal 3:1: Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς προεγράφη ἐσταυρωμένος suggests a narrative proclamation. The modern term ‘discourse’ may also be appropriate.

¹⁵ Present middle participle of ἀπόλλυμι, the verb also used in the citation 1:19.

¹⁶ Συζητητής was mostly translated with ‘debater’ (RSV, NRSV, NASB, ‘subtle debater’ NEB), but ‘trained philosopher’ (NIV; cf. Wendland 17 and Lietzmann 9: ‘Forscher’; Lindemann 45; Voss, *Wort*, 71; Kammler, *Kreuz*, 74–76; Schnabel 121) has been defended on ample lexical grounds by M. Lautenschlager, “Abschied vom Disputierer. Zur Bedeutung von συζητητής in 1 Kor 1,20,” *ZNW* 83 (1992) 276–85; 285: “Συζητητής der schulmässig ausgebildete griechisch-hellenistische Berufsphilosoph.” Accordingly, we take γραμματεὺς and συζητητής as respectively the Jewish and the Greek explication of σοφός.

¹⁷ It is preferable to understand ἐν in ἐν τῇ σοφίᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ as causal (BAG s.v. III, cf. 4:4), resulting in the meaning “on account of the wisdom of God,” and forming thereby a parallel expression of εὐδόκησεν ὁ θεός. Another interpretation takes ἐν as spatial in the figurative sense (BDR § 220.2 e.g. γινώσκω ἐν in Luke 24:35; also BAG s.v. I, cf. 1 Cor 2:7, 4:6) indicating the sphere where God might be known: “in the wisdom of God (such as found in creation, cf. Rom

God was pleased by the foolishness of what is preached¹⁸ to save those who believe.
 1:22 For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom,
 1:23 but we preach a crucified Messiah,¹⁹ a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles,
 1:24 but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, (we preach) Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.
 1:25 For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

1:26 Consider²⁰ your calling²¹, brothers and sisters, that not many were wise by human standards²², not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth,
 1:27 but God chose what is foolish in the world to shame²³ the wise, and God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong.
 1:28 God chose what is low and despised in the world, that which is not, to eliminate that which is,
 1:29 so that no flesh²⁴ can boast in Gods presence.
 1:30 But by his doing²⁵ you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption,
 1:31 so that²⁶, as it is written, “the one who boasts, must boast in the Lord.”

2:1 When I came to you, brothers and sisters, I did not come with superior eloquence or wisdom in announcing you the mystery²⁷ of God.

1:19–20)”. At least it is clear that this road to the knowledge of God has shown to be a dead end and has now been replaced by διὰ τῆς μωρίας τοῦ κηρύγματος (1:21b).

¹⁸ Κηρύγμα does not mean ‘preaching’ as activity but the content or message.

¹⁹ We do not translate ‘Christ crucified’ because this suggests the personal name, while Χριστός means Messiah here (NASB margin; Fee 75; Merklein 188; Thiselton 171; Schnabel 128). The adjectival participle ἐσταυρωμένον is used attributively (and not appositively ‘Christ as crucified,’ Schrage 185). That this message is perceived to be scandalous and foolish (1:23) arises from this combination of two highly contradictory elements: the Messiah and crucifixion.

²⁰ Βλέπετε is here an imperative.

²¹ Κλήσις refers to the fact of their ‘calling’ as an act of God (1:2, 9, cf. BAG s.v. 1). Paul refers here to their starting point, to “the position you had, when you were called” (cf. 1:26b beginning with ὅτι and 7:20).

²² Κατὰ σάρκα: according to the criteria of society; this adjectival phrase applies also to ‘powerful’ and ‘of noble birth’.

²³ Ἵνα καταισχύνῃ is not subjective-psychological but objective-eschatological language (Schnabel 143).

²⁴ Πᾶσα σὰρξ is biblical language, see e.g. Isa 40:5 (Lindemann 51); “die von Vergänglichkeit gekennzeichnete Welt der Menschen in ihrer Gesamtheit” (Schnabel 143).

²⁵ NASB; ἐξ αὐτοῦ: “He is the source” (NRSV).

²⁶ To make sense of the sentence as it stands, ἵνα is to be connected with καυχᾶσθω.

2:2 For I determined to know nothing²⁸ among you except Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

2:3 And I came to you in weakness and fear, and with much trembling.

2:4 My word and my preaching were not with persuasiveness of wisdom²⁹, but by transparent proof³⁰ of the Spirit's power³¹,

2:5 so that³² your faith would not rest on human wisdom but on the power of God.

2:6 We do, however, proclaim³³ wisdom among those who are prepared for it,³⁴

²⁷ The variant μυστήριον is to be preferred above μαρτύριον (NA²⁷, J.B. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* [London: United Bible Societies, 1975] 545) for the following reasons. 1) μυστήριον has better textual support (p^{46vid} Ⲭ* A C, against Ⲭ^c B D for μαρτύριον). 2) It is more likely that μαρτύριον has been suggested by 1:6 than that μυστήριον has been supplied from the later occurrence in 2:7. 3) A change to the reading μαρτύριον may be explained by the less appropriate combination of καταγγέλλειν and μυστήριον in the context of the early church, where μυστήριον referred especially to the sacraments or shared to some extent in the connotation of secrecy of the mystery religions (cf. G. Bornkamm, "μυστήριον," *TWNT* 4: 831–4; Thiselton 207: to avoid misunderstanding on account of increasing influence of mystery religions).

²⁸ NASB, likewise NIV, JB, NRSV, which take οὐ with τι, and not with ἔκρινα (differently Thiselton 211).

²⁹ The best option for the original text is ἐν πειθοῖ σοφίας, even though this variant does not occur in our extant manuscripts! This option is based on the slightly different preserved reading ἐν πειθοῖς σοφίας (in p⁴⁶ F G), from which the other variants arguably have evolved. Because πειθός in ἐν πειθοῖς σοφίας is not found as an adjective in all of Greek literature (B.M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (London: United Bible Societies, 1975) 546; but see Lietzmann 11, Thiselton 216, for a different argument) and dittography of the sigma was a common fault in copying (possibly even through hearing), the reading ἐν πειθοῖ σοφίας is more likely original, πειθοῖ being the Dative of πειθώ, 'persuasiveness' (LSJ, s.v.). Moreover, this reading presents a grammatical parallel to ἐν ἀποδείξει πνεύματος in the second half of the verse (Schrage 231–232; Schnabel 150). Cf. also Metzger, *Commentary*, 546.

³⁰ 'transparent proof' (Thiselton 204, 218) renders ἀποδείξις, a rhetorical term (Schrage 233), transformed by Paul to suit his purpose.

³¹ Πνεύματος καὶ δυνάμεως is a *hendiadys*.

³² This first part of the argument (1:18–2:5) ends with a ἵνα-sentence, which indicates Paul's teleological reasoning (Kümmel in Lietzmann 170; cf. Merklein 193).

³³ λαλέω with object denotes "speak and thereby assert, proclaim" (BDAG s.v. 2b).

³⁴ The translation of τέλειοι is important because the term defines the audience in view. Three interpretations are current: 1) Οἱ τέλειοι is interpreted as 'the mature' (RSV, NASB, NIV, NRSV) over against 'the immature' (νηπίοι) in 3:1–3 (Bachmann 119; Schlatter 107–8; Thiselton 231). This seems incongruous, though, because then this section 2:6–16 will find a very small audience in Corinth, since the congregation as a whole is characterized as νηπίοι in 3:1–3. 2) The same is valid when οἱ τέλειοι is translated with 'the perfect' and the addressees in 2:6 figure as a select group within the congregation. Τέλειοι in this sense brings us in the sphere of the initiated elite of the mystery religions (Bousset 71–1; Lietzmann 11; Conzelmann 79; cf. H. Jonas, *Gnosis und spätantiker Geist* 2/1 [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1966] 57–60) or of the ethically advanced in Jewish-Hellenistic wisdom (Strobel 65; Lindemann 61–2). The last sense was

not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers³⁵ of this age, who are being put out of action.³⁶
2:7 No, we speak God's secret³⁷ wisdom, a hidden wisdom,

probably the meaning the term had among the Corinthians. 3) For Paul τέλειοι is most likely a description of all believers, that is, those who have been made perfect through God's grace (Schrage 249; Wolff 50; Schnabel 165; cf. 1:7-8 and the use of ἅγιοι in 1:2). This is probably the best option under the condition that we interpret τέλειος not in a static but in a dynamic sense. The term may have the meaning 'qualified' (LSJ s.v., 3a) or 'fully up to standard in a certain respect' (BAG s.v., 2c, e.g. τελεία κατὰ πίστιν 1 Cl 55:6). Therefore τέλειοι is best rendered with a phrase like 'those who are prepared to accept it,' (cf. "those who are ripe for it," NEB; Robertson-Plummer 34); the phrase λαλοῦμεν ἐν τοῖς τελείοις may on the rhetorical level imply a rebuke (as e.g. in Mark 4:9; 8:17, 21 "Do you still not understand?") but especially extends a challenge. The intent of ἐν τοῖς τελείοις is not to limit the audience but to attract a hearing.

³⁵ In our opinion οἱ ἄρχοντες denotes earthly powers and not demonic forces. (The latter position is supported by Schlatter 110-1; Bultmann, *Theologie des Neuen Testaments* [9th ed.; Tübingen: Mohr, 1984] 256-9; Wendland 23; Lietzmann 12; Schrage 250). Nor are we to think of a combination of both (O. Cullmann, *Christus und die Zeit* [Zürich: Evangelischer Verlag, 1946] 169: "Offenkundig meint er mit den ἄρχοντες τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου zugleich die unsichtbaren 'Fürsten dieser Welt', die als solche öfters erwähnt werden, und ihre empirischen Werkzeuge, Herodes und Pilatus"). Arguments for the supernatural interpretation are (1) the presence of the idea of heavenly ἄρχοντες of the nations in Jewish theology (e.g. Dan 10:13); (2) the references to heavenly ἄρχαι elsewhere in Paul (Rom 8:38; 1 Cor 15:24); (3) the apparent inappropriateness of the adjectival participle τῶν καταργουμένων when applied to Caiaphas and Pilate (Weiss 54); and (4) the compatibility of demonic powers with the theory of a gnostic redeemer myth behind 2:6-16 (U. Wilckens, *Weisheit und Torheit. Eine exegetisch-religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung zu 1. Kor. 1 und 2* [Tübingen: Mohr, 1959] 60-3). However, the last argument is no longer valid because the Gnostic theory has generally been discarded and to invalidate the third argument we point to ἵνα τὰ ὄντα καταργήσῃ (1:28) and the idea in παράγει τὸ σχῆμα τοῦ κόσμου τούτου (7:31), clauses that refer to the powers and structures of this world. The arguments for the reference to human rulers are more convincing. The linguistic evidence is clear, as stated by Fee (104): "There is no evidence of any kind, either in Jewish or Christian writings until the second century, that the term (ἄρχοντες) was used of demons; and in the NT it invariably refers to earthly rulers and unambiguously does so in Paul in Rom 13:3." Furthermore, to make demon forces "the subject of ἐσταύρωσαν in v.8 completely transgresses the borders of pauline daemonology" (Bachmann 120). The view that οἱ ἄρχοντες τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου are demonic powers gained ascendancy in the early 20th century (cf. Weiss 54) but at the end of the century a change set in (Fee 103-4). The view that only human rulers are envisioned is shared by Robertson-Plummer 36-7, Lindemann 63-4, Strobel 65-6, Schnabel 166 and is argued in W. Carr, "The Rulers of this Age – 1 Corinthians 2:6-8," *NTS* 23 (1976) 20-35. If we want to extend the meaning of οἱ ἄρχοντες τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου in this verse beyond political leaders, a reference to human intellectual and cultural leadership (cf. the σοφοί, δυνατοί and εὐγενεῖς in 1:26) is more appropriate than demonic forces.

³⁶ Paul uses the present passive participle 'to be abolished,' 'cease' (LSJ s.v. II) of the verb καταργέω. The verb has a definite eschatological sense in this letter (1:28; 6:13; 13:8, 10; 15:24, 26). Like the present participles in 1:18, καταργούμενοι (adjective with ἄρχοντες) seems to indicate a process.

³⁷ The prepositional phrase ἐν μυστηρίῳ may grammatically be related to the verb λαλοῦμεν but, unless we support the idea of a special ('higher-level') wisdom by Paul, 'proclaiming in a

which God destined for our glory before time began,
 2:8 which none of the rulers of this age has known,
 for if³⁸ they had known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.
 2:9 But³⁹ as it is written,
 What eye has not seen, and ear has not heard,
 and in the heart of man did not come up,
 what⁴⁰ God has prepared for those who love him, (we do know)
 2:10 For⁴¹ to us God has revealed (them) by the Spirit;
 for the Spirit searches all things, even the deep things⁴² of God.
 2:11 For who among men knows the thoughts⁴³ of a man except man's spirit within him?

mysterious way' does not agree with Paul's straightforward preaching of the cross (2:1-5, cf. 1 Thess 2:3-6). Therefore, ἐν μυστηρίῳ qualifies – in addition to the adjectival participle ἀποκεκρυμμένην – the noun σοφίαν ('secret wisdom,' NRSV, RSV, NIV; cf. Moule IB 79: "consisting of a mystery").

³⁸ Εἰ γὰρ ἔγνωσαν, οὐκ ἂν ... ἐσταύρωσαν: conditional indicatives, presenting an untruth for the sake of argument (Wallace, 450-1).

³⁹ Verse 2:9 may be seen as a continuation of 2:7-8, so that the citation (starting with ἃ) functions as a second object of λαλοῦμεν in 2:7 (Merklein 232), or an explication of σοφίαν θεοῦ in 2:7 (Weiss 57: "sondern [eine Weisheit, die so beschaffen ist], wie geschrieben steht"). In this latter case, ἄλλα at the beginning of 2:9 stands parallel with ἄλλα at the beginning of 2:7 and both relate to the negations in 2:6 (σοφίαν οὐ τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου ..). However, it is more likely that ἄλλα in 2:9 refers to the immediate context of 2:8 and responds to οὐδεὶς (τῶν ἀρχόντων) ἔγνωκεν by introducing the opposite group, whose identity is named only after the citation in 2:10 (ἡμεῖν). Accordingly, we have to supply after ἄλλα in 2:9 (either before or after the citation) ἡμεῖς ἐγνώκαμεν. "Instead of declaring *expressis verbis* that 'we know' in contrast to the fact that the rulers do not know, Paul in his liveliness leaves this aside and leaps to the statement in v. 10a (...), which gives the reason why it is possible actually to have knowledge of a divine and hidden wisdom" (B. Frid, "The enigmatic ΑΛΛΑ in 1 Corinthians 2.9," *NTS* 31 (1985) 603-8, citation 607-8).

⁴⁰ Fee argues that this line ushers in the positive part, the knowledge of Gods wisdom through revelation (2:10-16), while the previous lines of the quotation belong to the failure of the leaders in 2:8. In this view, the accent of the quotation is on this last line and "the second ἃ functions very much like a ταῦτα" (Fee 108). However we would rather maintain the unity of thought of the citation in Paul's understanding as well as the οὐκ – ἀλλά pattern in 2:8-9, the *correctio* which is common in Paul (cf. N. Schneider, *Die rhetorische Eigenart der paulinischen Antithese* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1970), and significant throughout 1:18-2:16).

⁴¹ Two readings receive about equal support from commentators (cf. Schnabel 164, n.396). The weaker reading δέ (in ⚭ A C D G P Ψ 33 81 614 *Byz a*) is probably occasioned by the apparent *anacolouthon* of 2:9 and meant to facilitate taking the quotation as the object of ἀπεκάλυπεν ὁ θεός. The other reading, γάρ, has good support (p⁴⁶ B 1739 *Clement a*) and can be seen as the *lectio difficilior* (Fee 97, n.1). The sentence 2:10a gives the reason why it is *überhaupt* possible to speak of the hidden things mentioned in 2:9 (Schrage 256).

⁴² In current language "God's inmost heart," (Thiselton 257, adding: "which gives precisely the christological focus toward which Paul is working in 2:16").

In the same way, no one knows⁴⁴ the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.
 2:12 Now we have not received the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is from God, so that we may know the things that are freely given to us by God.
 2:13 These things we also proclaim not with words taught by human wisdom,⁴⁵ but with those taught by the Spirit, explaining spiritual things to spiritual people.⁴⁶
 2:14 But the person without the Spirit⁴⁷ does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him and he cannot come to know⁴⁸ them, because they are spiritually appraised⁴⁹.
 2:15 One who is spiritual appraises all things⁵⁰, yet he himself is appraised by no one.
 2:16 For who has known the mind of the Lord, that he may advise him?
 We, however, have the mind⁵¹ of Christ.

⁴³ As translation of the article τὰ in τὰ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου and τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ “the things” is too vague; “what is truly human / God’s” (NRSV) is also too broad; “the thoughts” (NASB; NIV) is closer to the mark, given the cognitive sphere of the context.

⁴⁴ Οὐδεὶς ἔγνωκεν as in 2:8.

⁴⁵ The genitive ἀνθρωπίνης σοφίας (genitive of means) modifies the noun λόγοις (BDR §183.2), while πνεύματος (genitive of agency) modifies unconventionally the verbal adjective διδασκοῖς, which presupposes the noun λόγοις of the first part of the antithesis.

⁴⁶ Several translations are possible because πνευματικοῖς may be taken as masculine or neuter, while the participle συγκρίνοντες may mean ‘interpret’/‘explain’ or ‘combine’/‘compare’ (BAG, s.v.). This gives us basically two options: “explaining spiritual things to spiritual people” and “combining spiritual things with spiritual things.” Regarding ‘spiritual things’ we may in this context think of expressing spiritual subject matter in appropriate language (cf. various suggestions in Thiselton 265). Given the use of πνευματικός in 2:15 and 3:1 for persons and the prevalent meaning ‘to explain’ for συγκρίνειν in biblical-Jewish tradition (see Merklein 241), the former option has our preference.

⁴⁷ The term ψυχικός occurs only here in 1Cor 1–4. Its emphasis is not on being characterized by ψυχή but on lacking πνεῦμα. Therefore we translate ‘without the Spirit’. Elsewhere in this letter in 15:44,46 the term is also used in opposition to πνευματικός and we find the same idea in Jude 19 (ψυχικοί πνεῦμα μὴ ἔχοντες). Likewise E. Schweizer, “ψυχικός,” *TWNT* 9:662–64 states that in 1 Cor 2:14 ψυχικός denotes the natural person, who lives without the eschatological gift of Spirit, who belongs to the world (2:12) and not to God (2:10).

⁴⁸ Ingressive aorist of γινώσκω (cf. Thiselton 270).

⁴⁹ The verb ἀνακρίνω refers in most cases to judicial hearings or close examinations of persons (BAG, s.v., cf. 1 Cor 4:3, 4 and 9:3), but for the three instances in 2:14, 15 referring to matters, the wider sense ‘appraise’ (NASB) or ‘assess the value of’ is appropriate.

⁵⁰ With NA²⁷ we retain τὰ before πάντα within brackets because it is supported by p⁴⁶ A C D* and its omission may be the result of *homoioteleuton*.

⁵¹ The term ‘mind’ (νοῦς) is surprising, especially in a response to the quotation with רִיחַ in the Hebrew. Some explain this feature by regarding νοῦς to be the equivalent of πνεῦμα here and by comparing 2:16c with 2:12 “We, however, have received the Spirit from God.” They consider the LXX choice of νοῦς in 16a (in the place of MT רִיחַ) to be sufficient reason for Paul’s use of νοῦς in 16c (Conzelmann 94, who translates: “Wir aber haben den Geist Christi” [78]; Schrage 267, Kammler, *Kreuz*, 233–34; Schnabel 180). However, Paul makes a sharp distinction in 14:14 between the two terms and νοῦς relates closer to thought than πνεῦμα does. The term νοῦς is probably used on purpose at the end of this section (2:6–16) packed with noetic terminology (cf.

3:1 For my part, brothers and sisters, I could not speak to you as to spiritual people, but as people of the flesh,⁵² as infants⁵³ in Christ.

3:2 I gave you milk to drink, not solid food, for you were not yet able to receive it. In fact, you are not able even now,

3:3 for you are still fleshly.⁵⁴

For since⁵⁵ there is still jealousy and dissension⁵⁶ among you, are you not fleshly and acting in a human way⁵⁷?

3:4 For when one says, “I am of Paul,” and another “I am of Apollos,” are you not mere men?

3:5 What is Apollos, really? Or what is Paul? Servants through whom you came to believe and each according to the task the Lord gave.

3:6 I planted, Apollos watered, but God caused the growth.

Voss, *Wort* 194, who lists γινώσκω [4 times], ἐραυνάω, εἶδον [twice], διδακτός, μωρία, ἀνακρίνω [3 times], and συμβιβάζω). The term νοῦς does not signify an empty faculty of reasoning (Kant’s ‘Vernunft’) but a ‘mind-set’ (Thiselton 275), ‘Sinn’ (Lietzmann 14, Strobel 73), ‘Gesinnung’ or ‘Denkweise’ (Weiss 68), all definitely implying certain content. This content is, according to the context 1:17–2:16 the secret of salvation through the crucified Christ. C.W. Strüder, *Gesinnung*, in an extensive study which focuses on ‘the mind of Christ’ in 2:16c, first relates the ‘mind of Christ’ to the cross, and then extends its significance in other directions (cf. esp. 303–4).

⁵² ὧς σαρκίνοις: The Corinthians consider themselves πνευματικοί. To refute them Paul does not call them ψυχικοί (2:14), because they did receive the Spirit but instead he calls them σαρκίνοι, that is people whose existence is not determined by the Spirit but only by ‘flesh and blood’. They are ‘in Christ’ but only ‘infants in Christ’. Against the opinion of some (cf. BDAG, Schrage 281–2), a distinction of meaning should be recognized between σάρκινος in 3:1 and σαρκικός in 3:3. In 3:1 σάρκινος stands parallel to νήπιος and has a neutral, factual sense (cf. 2 Cor 3:3; Fee 124: ‘of the flesh’), denoting severe spiritual limitations. In 3:3 σαρκικός, however, is clarified with κατὰ ἄνθρωπον περιπατεῖτε and has on the basis of this verb and the reference to strife a clearly ethical connotation (‘fleshly,’ Fee 124; cf. also Robertson–Plummer 52; Schlatter 126).

⁵³ The metaphorical use of νήπιος pertains to the understanding (LSJ, s.v.). The term stands in semantic contrast with τέλειος in 2:6. In relation to this term the problem is “not a failure of progression but a failure of basic comprehension. Maturity is possible for every Christian who has received the Spirit, and Paul is urging the Corinthians to grow in the sense of realizing afresh what they have received.” (conclusion of J. Francis, “As Babes in Christ’ – Some Proposals regarding 1 Corinthians 3:1–3,” *JSN7* [1980] 57). There is no doubt whether they have received the Spirit “because without the Spirit they could not be ἐν Χριστῷ” (Thiselton 289). Everyone who confesses Christ can do so only through the Spirit (12:3).

⁵⁴ See note 48.

⁵⁵ The particle ὅπου is used here in a causal sense (BDAG s.v., 3: ‘in so far as,’ ‘since’).

⁵⁶ Although textual attestation for ζῆλος καὶ ἔρις καὶ διχοστασίαι is considerable (p⁴⁶ D F 33 614 Marcion *a*), the addition of καὶ διχοστασίαι is easier to explain than its omission. Therefore the shorter version ζῆλος καὶ ἔρις (p¹¹ ⋈ A B C P Ψ *a*) is preferred.

⁵⁷ Κατὰ ἄνθρωπον περιπατεῖτε; 3:3–9 applies the difference between the wisdom of God and the wisdom of men in esp. 1:17–31 to the ethical life of the community.

3:7 So⁵⁸ neither the one who plants counts for anything, nor the one who waters, but God who causes the growth.
 3:8 The one who plants and the one who waters are united,⁵⁹ but each will receive his own reward according to his own work.
 3:9 As fellow-workers we are God's,⁶⁰ while you are God's⁶¹ field, God's building-project⁶².
 3:10 According to the grace of God given to me, as a wise master-builder I laid the foundation, but someone else⁶³ builds on it, and each one must take care how he builds.
 3:11 For another foundation than the one which is laid,⁶⁴ that is Jesus Christ, no one can lay.
 3:12 If someone builds on the foundation⁶⁵ with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, or straw,
 3:13 the work of each person will become manifest, for the day⁶⁶ will make it clear, because by fire it will be revealed, and the fire will test each man's work for what it is worth.
 3:14 If someone's work that he has built on it⁶⁷ remains, he will receive a reward.

⁵⁸ 'So', ὥστε, can have a weak sense here: 'and so', 'accordingly' being taken as "simply an inferential particle" (Moule 144) or have a stronger, final, sense: 'so that', 'in order that', as in 3:21.

⁵⁹ "Ἐν εἰσιν wants to say that the servants cannot be forged apart (Lietzmann 15: "ἐν εἰσιν ist negativ zu interpretieren: 'sind untrennbar', so dass sie nicht als gesonderte Parteihäupter aufgestellt werden können").

⁶⁰ Commentators disagree on the sense of θεοῦ συνεργοί. Some think of cooperation with God ('co-workers of God'; thus Weiss 78 who explains this meaning as a turn to a high apostolic consciousness in verses 9-11; Robertson-Plummer 58 refers for this thought to 1 Cor 15:10. In the same way interpret Wolff 68, Schrage 293-4, Schnabel 200, and Fitmyer 195-6). Others think of workers together in the service of God (Fee 134: "God's we are, being fellow-workers"; Fascher 133; Lindemann 82; Thiselton 306). This question cannot be solved grammatically but because the context opposes God and men (including leaders), the second option of 'together under God' appears more likely here.

⁶¹ The emphatic position of the genitive θεοῦ before the noun in 'God's field' and 'God's building-project' is in contrast with the genitives Παύλου and Ἀπολλῶ in 3:4 and sets down that all belong to God and not to any person or party.

⁶² We translate οἰκοδομή with 'building-project' rather than building, οἰκοδομή meaning in the first place the act of building (often figuratively, cf. the other references in this letter 14:3, 5 and 14:12, 26 πρὸς οἰκοδομὴν) and then in second place its result (O. Michel, "οἰκοδομή," *TWNT* 5:147-9; Wolff 69: "das im Bau befindliche Gebäude").

⁶³ The building-motif is a continuation of the end of verse 9 but the scope of the argument broadens as instead of the specific name Apollos (3:4-6) the general term ἄλλος is used, followed by the indefinite pronoun τις in 3:12-18.

⁶⁴ Τὸν κείμενον of κείμεναι, here 'to be placed in position' (LSJ, s.v. IV)

⁶⁵ The earliest manuscript evidence (p⁴⁶ Ⲙ* A B C* 81) is in favour of θεμέλιον instead of θεμέλιον τοῦτον (Ⲙ² C³ D M); the latter evidently wants to make explicit what is understood.

⁶⁶ The day of judgment (cf. 1:8; 4:5), not a metaphor referring to morning light.

⁶⁷ The verb remains ἐποικοδομέω, as in 3:12.

3:15 If someone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss,⁶⁸ but he himself will be saved, thus as⁶⁹ through fire.
 3:16 Do you not know that you are God's temple⁷⁰ and that God's Spirit dwells in you⁷¹?
 3:17 If someone destroys God's temple, God will destroy⁷² him.
 For God's temple is holy, which is what you are.⁷³
 3:18 Let no one deceive himself.
 Whoever among you thinks himself to be wise in this age,⁷⁴
 let him become a fool,⁷⁵ so that he may become wise.
 3:19 For the wisdom of this age is foolishness⁷⁶ in the sight of⁷⁷ God.
 For it is written, "He catches the wise in their craftiness,"
 3:20 and again, "The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are futile."
 3:21 Therefore, let nobody boast in men; for all things are yours,
 3:22 whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future – all belong to you.
 3:23 and you belong to Christ, and Christ belongs to God.

⁶⁸ Ζημιωθήσεται may be translated with 'will suffer punishment' (BAG s.v. 2) but the better rendering is 'will suffer loss' (cf. 2 Cor 7:9 and Phil 3:8; Fee 143; Wolff 74; Thiselton 314). The parallel phrasing in 3:14 and 15a points to 'suffer loss of reward'.

⁶⁹ Οὕτως .. ὥς underlines the metaphorical use of διὰ πυρός (Collins 160). διὰ is used locally and not instrumentally, as in 1 Pet 3:20 (Schrage 304). The metaphor refers to a piece of wood saved just in time from the fire (cf. Amos 4:11; Zech 3:2) or a man escaping a house by going through a dangerous firezone. The thought of purifying judgment by fire is common in Biblical and Jewish-Hellenistic literature (cf. Weiss 83–4).

⁷⁰ Ναός denotes the temple building itself (ἱερόν the holy area of the temple) and continues the image of a building project, "but in a specific way which narrows its focus to the issue of holiness and to God's sanctifying indwelling" (Thiselton 315).

⁷¹ Plural ἐν ὑμῖν: "the Spirit of God dwells in the Christian community *corporately*" (Thiselton 316).

⁷² Several (mostly Western) witnesses read φθείρει (present) under influence of the same verb in the *protasis*, but the future tense φθερεῖ will be the original reading. "Das Jus talionis ist, wie das Futur des Nachsatzes anzeigt, auf eschatologische Ebene verlagert." (E. Käsemann, *Exegetische Versuche und Besinnungen* II [Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1964] 70). Käsemann speaks here of a 'sentence of holy law,' shown by the correspondence between the transgression and the punishment which is strengthened by the chiasmic structure of the verse.

⁷³ Ὁ .. ναὸς τοῦ θεοῦ .., οἵτινές ἐστε ὑμεῖς: "an instance of a very understandable *constructio ad sensum*" (Moule 131).

⁷⁴ Following the punctuation of NA²⁷, ἐν τῷ αἰῶνι τούτῳ should probably be taken with σοφὸς εἶναι. Paul shows them their limited range of understanding; the wisdom they claim is only the wisdom of this age. (cf. Conzelmann 106). Consequently, μωρὸς γενέσθω stands unqualified, which makes this injunction even more ironical than when it is combined with 'in this age.'

⁷⁵ The irony of μωρὸς γενέσθω reminds the reader of the foolishness of the word of the cross in 1:21–25. The combination of μωρὸς γενέσθω, and ἵνα γένηται σοφός is a paradox.

⁷⁶ Here μωρία appears in a new sense: μωρία moves from the foolishness of faith in the cross in 3:18 to the foolishness of the wisdom of the world in the eyes of God in 3:19–20.

⁷⁷ 'In the sight of' translates παρὰ τῷ θεῷ (cf. μὴ γίνεσθε φρόνιμοι παρ' ἑαυτοῖς, Rom 12:16)

4:1 So then,⁷⁸ let men⁷⁹ think of us as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.

4:2 Moreover, what is required⁸⁰ of stewards is that one be found⁸¹ faithful.

4:3 I care very little⁸² if I am judged⁸³ by you or by any human court⁸⁴,
I do not even judge myself.

4:4 My conscience is clear, but I am not acquitted because of this; it is the Lord who judges me.

4:5 So then, judge nothing before the time⁸⁵, until the Lord comes,
who will also bring to light the hidden things of darkness⁸⁶ and shall reveal the plans of the hearts⁸⁷, and then each will receive recognition⁸⁸ from God.

⁷⁸ Οὕτως refers to the preceding argument in 3:5–23 and ὥς continues with the application. The first person plural ἡμᾶς brings the argument closer to home: to Paul and Apollos (cf. 4:6).

⁷⁹ Ἄνθρωπος occurs as the equivalent of an indefinite pronoun (cf. 7:26, 11:28; BAG, s.v. 3γ; Lietzmann 18; Fee 158), but that probably falls short of its meaning here. In 1 Cor 1–4 ἄνθρωπος functions almost as a category (in opposition to θεός) and in the near context 4:3, 4 ἀνθρώπινος is contrasted with κύριος (Weiss 92). Therefore a reference to humanity is to be preferred above the use of an indefinite pronoun. The collective noun ‘men’ (NIV) does more justice to the argument (cf. 3:21, 4:9) than the singular ‘a man’ (NASB).

⁸⁰ Much manuscript evidence (p⁴⁶ ✠ A C D F G P) supports the reading ζητεῖτε (imperative, accepted by Weiss; Héring 27: “seek nothing else of administrators than that they are faithful”). However, the imperative does not agree with the purport of the following verse (4:3) and as NA²⁷ suggests itacism may have led to the small change from ζητεῖται (B, all Fathers: “it is sought”). The latter reading is accepted by almost all commentators. According to Schrage (322) ζητεῖται is a *passivum divinum*, for others 4:3 is a general saying (Lindemann 96).

⁸¹ Εὐρεθῇ refers to the judgment that will be passed (Lindemann 96).

⁸² Ἐμοὶ δὲ εἰς ἐλάχιστόν ἐστιν is a conflation of ἐλάχιστόν ἐστιν and εἰς ἐλάχιστόν γίνεται and means “it is of little or no importance to me” (BDAG s.v. εἰμί 2c.β; Lindemann 97).

⁸³ While in the judicial sphere κρίνω signifies the final act of passing judgment, ἀνακρίνω expresses the process of investigation and interrogation (Weiss 96; LSJ s.v. II.2; Acts 4:9, 12:19, 24:8). The Corinthian judgmental attitude towards the apostle is also addressed in 9:3, where, unlike here, he does defend himself (Ἡ ἐμὴ ἀπολογία τοῖς ἐμὲ ἀνακρίνουσιν ἐστιν αὕτη).

⁸⁴ The unusual use of ἡμέρα in the meaning of ‘human court of judgment’ may be meant as a contrast with ἡ ἡμέρα (i.e. of the Lord) in 3:13 and 1:8. Moreover, in Hebrew “a close link exists between day and judgment or court (יֹם)” (Thiselton 338 pointing to Germ. *Reichstag* in n. 222). In Greek ἡμέρα may refer to a fixed day (LSJ s.v. I.5; Acts 12:21; 17:31 a fixed day of judgment).

⁸⁵ Καίρος (like ἡμέρα in 3:13) has become a technical term for the final judgment (G. Delling, “καίρος,” *TWNT* 3:463). πρὸ καιροῦ is explicated with ἕως ἃν ἔλθῃ ὁ κύριος.

⁸⁶ The causative verb φωτίζω calls for the expression τὰ κρυπτὰ τοῦ σκοτούς, which is only found in this place in the NT; in 14:25 we find τὰ κρυπτὰ τῆς καρδίας and in Rom 2:16 τὰ κρυπτὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων. The point of τοῦ σκοτούς “is not that what will be revealed is morally bad, although that may be suggested, but that hitherto they have been quite secret, hidden, it may be, from the person’s own conscience.” (Robertson-Plummer 78).

⁸⁷ The two clauses φωτίσει τὰ κρυπτὰ τοῦ σκοτούς and φανερώσει τὰς βουλὰς τῶν καρδιῶν form a synonymous parallelism, which sounds like a traditional formula or citation (Weiss 99; L.

4:6 These things, brothers and sisters, I have presented as applying⁸⁹ to myself and Apollos for your sake,
 so that from us you may learn “not to go beyond what is written,”⁹⁰
 so that⁹¹ none of you will be inflated with arrogance⁹² in favour of the one against the other.
 4:7 For who makes you⁹³ different from anyone else?⁹⁴
 What do you have that you did not receive?
 And if you received it, why do you boast as though you did not?
 4:8 Already⁹⁵ you are satisfied! Already you are rich! Without us⁹⁶ you have become kings!
 I wish⁹⁷ you had become kings so that we could reign with you!
 4:9 For, It seems to me,⁹⁸ God has exhibited us apostles⁹⁹ as last of all, as men condemned to die,¹⁰⁰
 because we have become a spectacle to the world, both to angels and to men.

Mattern, *Das Verständnis des Gerichtes bei Paulus* [Zürich: Zwingli, 1966] 183 suggests from Qumranic circles).

⁸⁸ Ἐπαίνοσ is not salvation (as in 3:15) but comparable with μισθός (3:14, cf. Mattern, *Verständnis* 183–4). Strobel 89: “The expression ὁ ἑπαίνος γενήσεται ἐκάστῳ agrees with the custom in the Hellenistic world to give public commendation or praise to citizens of merit (cf. Rom 13:3).”

⁸⁹ See Excursus 1.

⁹⁰ See Excursus 2.

⁹¹ The double ἵνα is unusual but not absent in Paul (Gal 3:14, 4:5). The second ἵνα-clause might be one of apposition, like regularly in Johannine writings (Wallace, 475–6) but more likely it denotes result (Conzelmann 113; Schlatter 155: “Aus der Überhebung über die Schrift entsteht die Verehrung für die Lehrer, die aus ihnen die Herren der Gemeinde macht”).

⁹² The verb φυσιόω (here passive, ‘to become puffed up’ or ‘conceited’), esp. found in early Christian literature (BDAG s.v.) has a very negative import (Strobel 89). It returns in 4:18, 19.

⁹³ Here for the first time the letter addresses the reader in the singular.

⁹⁴ NIV for τίς γάρ σε διακρίνει; “The English equivalent to such rhetoric would be: ‘Who in the world do you think you are, anyway?’” (Fee 171). The verb διακρίνω (‘discern, distinguish’) appears to be a wordplay on ἀνακρίνω (‘examine’) and κρίνω (‘judge’) of 4:3–5 (Fee 170).

⁹⁵ See Chapter 6.2 Eschatology.

⁹⁶ Χωρίς ἡμῶν (ἐβασιλεύσατε) could mean ‘(reign) without our help’ but ‘without our participation’ is more likely as contrast of the wistful phrase ἵνα καὶ ἡμεῖς ὑμῖν συμβασιλεύσωμεν.

⁹⁷ The word ὄφελόν, while it is verbal in origin, serves in the New Testament as a particle introducing a wish (BDF §359.1; Moule 137), here an unattainable wish (Fitzmyer 218).

⁹⁸ The following verses 4:9–13 are not ironical but give a radical interpretation of apostolic existence and exhibit its paradoxical character. They are God’s workers (3:9) and stewards of his mysteries (4:1) but the life they live borders disaster.

⁹⁹ Paul may mean himself, himself and Apollos, the leading apostles, or the group (‘apostolic community’), which brings the gospel. The last option is the best.

¹⁰⁰ By paraphrasing: “God has put us apostles on display at the end of the procession, like men to die condemned in the arena,” the NIV makes the image of the amphitheatre explicit (cf. Collins 188).

4:10 We are fools¹⁰¹ for Christ, but you are wise in Christ!¹⁰²

We are weak¹⁰³, but you are strong!

You are distinguished, we are dishonoured!

4:11 To the present hour¹⁰⁴ we are hungry and thirsty¹⁰⁵, we are poorly clothed, receive rough treatment,¹⁰⁶ and have no roof above our heads,¹⁰⁷

4:12 We labour, working with our own hands.¹⁰⁸

When we are insulted,¹⁰⁹ we bless,¹¹⁰

¹⁰¹ It is recently argued that with μωρός Paul refers to the ‘fool’ or jester who performs on the stage in Greek ‘mime,’ an interpretation seemingly supported by the use of θέατρον in v.9 (L.L. Welborn, *Paul, the Fool of Christ* (London: T&T Clark, 2005) *passim*. Whether this idea finds support in 1 Cor 1–4 will appear in Chapter 11. The natural way of understanding μωρός is to connect it with the foolishness of the cross (1:18) and the consequent need to become a fool in order to become wise (3:18). The apostles are ‘fools’ in accordance with the way the cross is perceived in the world. Διὰ with the accusative may indicate the reason or the goal (BDR §222.2a). Both may be involved (Schrage 343, n.175), but ‘because of’ fits best in the context, resulting in the sense “for us serving Christ has led to a foolish kind of life, a life that seems inferior.” ‘On Christ’s account’ (διὰ Χριστόν) “further confirms the links with Christology and the cross in 1:25–27 and 3:18” (Thiselton 361).

¹⁰² The three statements in 4:10 are a form of irony (Schrage 343; Lindemann 107) but also contain a measure of truth. In the eyes of the world the apostles are fools, weaklings and nobodies. This is also what the Corinthian faultfinders feel or think (Conzelmann 116). That they are wrong only becomes apparent in the light of the wisdom of the cross. Not only Greek but also Jewish wisdom thinks differently about being wise, strong and honored (e.g. *m. ’Abot* 4:1, Collins 189).

¹⁰³ “Paul’s weaknesses reflect the ‘weakness of God’” (Fee 176).

¹⁰⁴ ‘Paul now abandons irony for straight talk’ (Fee 177). The temporal markers ἄχρι τῆς ἄρτι ὥρας in this verse and ἕως ἄρτι at the end (v.13) serve to locate the list of tribulations in day-to-day reality and contribute to the apocalyptic tone of the passage: another time will come soon. This catalogue of afflictions provides a shrill contrast with the complacent religious attitude of the Corinthians (Schrage 434–5).

¹⁰⁵ The *polysyndeton* in the form of the repetition of καί before each verb suggests completeness; “a chain of suffering of which no link fails” (Weiss 111).

¹⁰⁶ Κολαφιζόμεθα indicates rough treatment which may vary from being ‘knocked out’ figuratively by sickness to being molested in mob violence (Thiselton 362).

¹⁰⁷ Ἀστατοῦμεν may be compared with the designation ‘of no fixed abode’ in English law (Thiselton 362).

¹⁰⁸ “This reference to manual labour clearly distinguishes Paul from both the begging Cynic preachers and the rhetors, especially the Sophists who took pay for their teaching. The Jewish view of manual work by teachers was different” (Witherington 144).

¹⁰⁹ The participle λοιδορούμενοι functions in the *protasis* as would ἐάν or ὅταν λοιδορώμεθα, before εὐλογοῦμεν in the *apodosis* (cf. Moule IB 150). Likewise the following διωκόμενοι ἀνεχόμεθα and δυσφημούμενοι παρακαλοῦμεν. The verb λοιδορέω indicates either direct or indirect abuse, either in the face or behind one’s back, that is either insults or slander (Schnabel 253). Because δυσφημούμενοι in the next verse (v.13) means ‘slander’, here the meaning ‘insult’ is chosen.

when we are persecuted, we endure,¹¹¹

4:13 when we are slandered,¹¹² we entreat.¹¹³

We have become as refuse of the world,¹¹⁴ offscouring of all¹¹⁵ until this very moment.

4:14 I am not writing these things to shame¹¹⁶ you, but to correct¹¹⁷ you as my dear children.

¹¹⁰ Εὐλογέω may have a non-religious sense ('reply with good words,' Thiselton 363) but the common NT sense 'bless' is more likely (cf. Matt 5:44; Rom 12:14; Lietzmann 20; Wolff 90; Schrage 347).

¹¹¹ "Fortgesetzter Widerstand gegen die Verkündigung des Evangeliums kann nur ausgehalten werden – was der Feindesliebe entspricht" (Schnabel 254; Schrage 348).

¹¹² The variant βλασφημούμενοι (p⁶⁸ Ⲙ² B D F G a) is more common in the NT than δυσφημούμενοι (p⁴⁶ Ⲙ^{*} A C P a), which occurs only here in the NT and therefore as *lectio difficilior* is to be preferred (Fee 165; Schnabel 241). The verb means 'use ill words', 'speak words of ill omen' (LSJ), thus 'slander' or 'defame' (BDAG). In 2 Cor 4:6 the noun δυσφημία occurs as the opposite of εὐφημία ('good report').

¹¹³ Here and in a few other places in the NT παρακαλέω may have the meaning 'conciliate' (BAG s.v. 5: "somewhat like our 'keep the door open'"; RSV, NASB), or 'speak friendly' (NIV; NRSV; Fee 180; Weiss 113; Lietzmann 20; Conzelmann 112; Merklein 316; Schrage 348; Schnabel 255), but the lexical basis for this translation remains very weak (cf. BAG, LSJ). The NEB with 'we humbly make our appeal' and Thiselton's translation 'we appeal to them directly' stay closer to the core meaning of παρακαλέω and are quite justifiable in this context (Thiselton 364). This interpretation keeps παρακαλέω in 4:13 related to παρακαλέω in 1:10 and 4:16. Paul's dealing with the Corinthians (in 1:10, 4:16) is consonant with his practice in general (4:13). It is possible that δυσφημέω expresses what Paul experienced from the Corinthians.

¹¹⁴ Some understand περικαθάρματα in 4:13 as 'scape-goats.' This cultic interpretation is supported by the cultic use of the uncommon verb περικαθαρίζω in Isa 6:7 and the fact that the rare noun περικαθάρμα (cf. LSJ, s.v.) stands for כִּפָּר ('ransom' BDB) in LXX Prov 21:18 (thus LXX-D "Lösegeld"; Lietzmann 20–1; Hanson, *The Paradox of the Cross*, 36: "Paul regarded the sufferings and possible death of the apostles as possessing an atoning, reconciling, salvific value"). However, 1) a cultic interpretation of περικαθάρμα is unsure. In LXX Prov 21:18, NETS has 'refuse' and GELS (s.v.) translates "that which is thrown away in cleansing." More importantly, 2) it is unlikely that Paul would have meant to suffer for the world; τοῦ κόσμου is not object but 'das urteilende Subjekt' (Weiss 114–5; Schrage 349–50).

¹¹⁵ The second term περίψημα is almost synonym with περικαθάρματα. Both refer to what is scraped off in the process of cleaning, hence 'off-scourings', 'scum', 'refuse' (NASB; RSV; Fee 180; Conzelmann 117; Strobel 92; Wolff 91; Merklein 316–7; Schnabel 255). Stählin *TWNT* 6: 90–1 rejects the idea of plain self-abasement in the face of the world and advocates a cultic interpretation for περίψημα, as well as for περικαθάρματα: "Gerade die Geschmähten und Verachteten sind Segen und Sühnung. Paulus bekennt sich damit dazu, dass er ein Mensch ist, der sich selbst und sein Leben wegwirft und darum wie ein als nichtswürdig geltender Sündenbock und wie ein verachtetes Sühnopfer angesehen wird." However, there is a third option between self-abasement and self-atonement, and that is having a share in the opprobrium of the cross. The cross is not interpreted in the language of atonement in 1 Cor 1 but in the language of acceptance and understanding. The same is true for apostleship in 1 Cor 4. As the message is marginal, so is the existence of the apostle. On this our interpretation of 1 Cor 4:9–13, see Chapter 11.1.4.

4:15 For though¹¹⁸ you may have countless¹¹⁹ guardians in Christ,
you still¹²⁰ do not have many fathers,
for in Christ Jesus through the gospel, I¹²¹ begot you.
4:16 Therefore, I urge¹²² you, become imitators of me.¹²³
4:17 For this reason, I have sent Timothy to you, who is my dear and faithful child in the
Lord.
who will remind you of my ways¹²⁴ in Christ, as I teach them everywhere in every
church.
4:18 Some of you have become arrogant, as if I were not coming to you¹²⁵.
4:19 But I will come to you soon, if the Lord is willing,
and I will find out not only the speech of these arrogant people, but also their power¹²⁶.
4:20 For the kingdom of God manifests¹²⁷ itself not in word but in power.

¹¹⁶ The active voice of ἐντρέπω only here in the NT: ‘make someone ashamed’ (BAG). “The root-meaning of ἐντρέπειν is perhaps ‘to turn in,’ and so to make a person ‘hang his head,’ as a sign, either of reverence or of shame, as here” (Robertson-Plummer 89).

¹¹⁷ Important manuscripts (p⁴⁶ B D F G Ψ **℣**) have νουθετῶ instead of νουθετῶν (in p^{11vid} **Ⲱ** A C P *a*) but νουθετῶ probably arose from conforming to γράφω while νουθετῶν is appropriate as the opposite of ἐντρέπων (Lindemann 113; Schnabel 257). There is only a small difference in meaning.

¹¹⁸ Ἐάν with present subjunctive suggests future result in the *apodosis* (Robertson-Plummer 89; Fee 185: “you may end up having”) or may just leave open whether this is really the case (BDR §373; Lindemann 113).

¹¹⁹ For μυριάς the definite number ‘ten thousand’ is a secondary meaning (LSJ, s.v.; Lindemann 113). Here the primary meaning ‘countless’ is appropriate (Schnabel 259).

¹²⁰ Ἀλλά after a conditional *protasis* signifies restriction: ‘at least,’ ‘still’ (BDR § 448.5; Lindemann 113).

¹²¹ ‘In Christ Jesus’ is emphatic because of its position in the sentence, and Paul’s role is emphatic because of the explicit ἐγώ.

¹²² Cf. 1:10 and 4:13.

¹²³ Not in an absolute sense; implied is καθὼς καὶ ὁ Χριστοῦ (11:1; Wolff 94). Paul refuses to be a party leader (cf. 1:12 and 3:4). The implication is that apostolic existence in 4:9–13 follows the pattern of Christ (cf. Merklein 327: “seine vom Gekreuzigten geprägte apostolische Existenz ist Gegenstand der Nachahmung”).

¹²⁴ Τὰς ὁδούς μου may refer to Paul’s life (Robertson-Plummer 91, cf. 4:16: μιμηταί μου γίνεσθε), or to his teaching (v.17: καθὼς διδάσκω), either as ethical directions (הלכות, Bousset 78; Lietzmann 22; Thiselton 374), or as doctrinal instruction (Weiss 120). Paul’s teaching, however, should not be divided from his life. A doctrine that is only directed to the mind is foreign to Paul; the purpose of his teaching is God shaping the life of the Corinthians (Schlatter 164). Therefore ‘my ways’ includes teaching and practice (Fee 189; Merklein 330–1; Lindemann 116; Schnabel 265; Schrage 360: “Wegweisungen im Zeichen des Kreuzes”).

¹²⁵ The sentence may also mean “Some of you have become arrogant, *claiming* (or *supposing*) *that* I am not coming to you” (Conzelmann 119); in that case ὥς indicates the personal view of the τινες.

¹²⁶ Λόγος reaches back to the beginning of the argument in 1:17b (οὐκ ἐν σοφίᾳ λόγου) and δύναμις is connected with 1:18b (Strobel 94 concludes therefore: “Gedanklich schliesst sich in gewisser Hinsicht die Argumentation”).

4:21 What do you want? Shall I come to you with a rod of discipline or with love and a spirit¹²⁸ of gentleness?

Excursus on 4:6a

Ταῦτα most likely refers back not just to the immediate context (4:1–5)¹²⁹ but to 3:5–4:5,¹³⁰ the section which deals with servant leadership in the church. Yet it can also be argued “that ‘these things’ refers to the extended paraenesis Paul has directed to those who were disrupting the unity of the community (1:10),”¹³¹ that is 1:10–4:4. The sentence Ταῦτα δέ, ἀδελφοί, μετεσχημάτισα εἰς ἑμαυτὸν καὶ Ἀπολλῶν δι’ ὑμᾶς requires explanation. In particular, the sense of μετασχηματίζω (‘change the form of’)¹³² is disputed. We distinguish three possible explanations of this verb, which depend on the meaning given to ταῦτα. The first makes ταῦτα refer to figures of speech used in 3:5–4:5, the second to things applicable to unnamed leaders in Corinth, the third to general teaching on leadership contained in 3:5–4:5.

1) Fee states that μετεσχημάτισα refers to forms of figurative speech in chapter 3: Paul “went from metaphor to metaphor, changing images as he went along.”¹³³ Σχῆμα and σχηματίζω can be used of figures of speech (σχῆμα as *figura* was seen as a departure from the neutral position of language, comparable with the human body taking on an active posture instead of a position at rest).¹³⁴ According to Hooker, “the meaning seems to be: ‘I have applied these figures of speech to myself and Apollos.’”¹³⁵ This, however, interprets μετεσχημάτισα εἰς as having two different meanings combined: both change and application, literary change from one figure of speech to another and personal application to Paul and Apollos. Yet μετασχηματίζω εἰς presents itself as one action and therefore the interpretation of changing metaphors is not plausible.

2) The second option had good credentials in the past, fell into disrepute but found a new defense recently. The exegesis of the early church connects the interpretation of 4:6 with 1:12. It views the names of Apollos, Paul and Cephas in that verse as a cover to avoid mentioning the local ringleaders, while still aiming at them.¹³⁶

¹²⁷ The verb is lacking in the sentence and we have to supply ‘is’ or ‘manifests itself’; the latter fits better in the dynamic of the sentence.

¹²⁸ Ἐν πνεύματι πραΰτητος refers here to the human spirit (RSV, NEB; NASB, NIV; Wolff 97) and not to the divine Spirit (thus Schnabel 268) especially because of the absence of the article (Robertson–Plummer 93).

¹²⁹ Strobel 89: to the principle of not judging.

¹³⁰ Fee 166; Schrage 334; Merklein 306; Wolff 84; Lindemann 101; Schnabel 242.

¹³¹ Collins 179.

¹³² BAG, LSJ.

¹³³ Fee 167.

¹³⁴ H. Lausberg, *Handbuch der literarischen Kritik* (2nd ed. München: Hüber, 1973) §600.

¹³⁵ Hooker, “Beyond the Things which are Written’: An Examination of 1 Cor. IV. 6,” *NTS* 10 (1963) 131; Fee 165.

¹³⁶ Cf. Bachmann 58–9.

Starting with the established meaning of μετασχηματίζω ('to change the form'),¹³⁷ followed by the preposition εἰς which, with verbs of changing, indicates the goal,¹³⁸ the natural interpretation of 4:6a is that Paul transferred the instructions on leadership (ταῦτα) to himself and Apollos.¹³⁹ D.R. Hall,¹⁴⁰ in line with John Chrysostom, speaks of an analogy: "Paul illuminates situation A (their existing situation: the presence in Corinth of rival wisdom-teachers) by an analogy with situation B (the collegueship of Paul and Apollos)." Fiore¹⁴¹ observes here the rhetorical practice of *covert allusion*.¹⁴² An objection to this interpretation is that the use of this rhetorical device ought not to be revealed; it would lose its rhetorical effect. Fiore is right, however, when he answers that Paul's concern is "not for the purity of rhetorical forms."¹⁴³ Moreover, even when Paul reveals his rhetorical practice in 4:6a, he still leaves much unsaid. The text does not identify the others but speaks only in very general terms about ἕκαστος (3:10), τις (3:10-18), and ἄνθρωπος (4:1).

3) According to the third option ταῦτα does not refer to figures of speech, nor to things pertaining to the Corinthian teachers but to the preceding teaching on leadership. On the basis of semantic and exegetical considerations J.S. Vos argues for μετασχηματισμός as exemplification, in the sense of application of the general to the particular.¹⁴⁴ While in the previous option the change meant in μετεσχημάτισα is a transfer from particular (failing leaders) to other particular persons (Paul and Apollos), in this third option the transfer is from the general to the particular.¹⁴⁵ Then μετεσχημάτισα would simply mean 'I have applied this teaching to myself and Apollos' or 'I have made myself and Apollos examples of this.'¹⁴⁶ In this way we would end up with translations as, "these things I have applied to myself," or "these things I have illustrated with the example of myself."

We conclude that Ταῦτα δέ, ἀδελφοί, μετεσχημάτισα εἰς ἑμαυτὸν καὶ Ἀπολλῶν δι' ὑμᾶς says something of the procedure which the author has followed in the previous section. This procedure has been variously understood as literary (changing metaphors) or as rhetorical in aiming at an effect among the readers. The desired effect of 4:6 on its

¹³⁷ LSJ, BAG also 'transform'; Robertson Plummer 80: 'put differently' or 'alter the arrangement.'

¹³⁸ BAG, s.v. 4b.

¹³⁹ BDAG s.v. 3 closely relates μετασχηματίζω in 1 Cor 4:6 to σχηματίζω ('say something with the aid of a figure of speech'), and gives μετασχηματίζω in 1 Cor 4:6 a separate rhetorical meaning: 'to show a connection or bearing of one thing on another,' *'apply to.'*

¹⁴⁰ D.R. Hall, "A Disguise for the Wise: ΜΕΤΑΣΧΗΜΑΤΙΣΜΟΣ in 1 Corinthians 4.6," *NTS* 40 (1994) 143-9.

¹⁴¹ B. Fiore, "'Covert Allusion' in 1 Corinthians 1-4," *CBQ* 47 (1985) 85-102.

¹⁴² Likewise: Robertson-Plummer 81; Collins 179; Winter, *Philo and Paul*, 196-7.

¹⁴³ Fiore, "Covert Allusion," 96.

¹⁴⁴ J.S. Vos, "Der ΜΕΤΑΣΧΗΜΑΤΙΣΜΟΣ in 1Kor 4,6," *ZNW* 86 (1995) 154-72, 171: "That which Paul clarifies through himself and Apollos is for him part of a larger frame, viz. that of the evaluation of the apostles and teachers by the churches, respectively by human authorities altogether."

¹⁴⁵ Cf. Meyer 96: "Das an sich Allgemeine, aber in individualisierender Weise an besonderen Subjecten zum Ausdruck gebracht, erscheint dadurch als *umgestaltet*."

¹⁴⁶ Lietzmann 18; Fascher 145-6.

hearers is likely to have been the sudden realization that Paul is speaking about them and especially their own teachers after all. This amounts to a covert but effective criticism of malfunctioning leaders. The readers are challenged: if the shoe fits, wear it. Our translation prefers the second option because it is rhetorically more effective than the rather bland idea of the apostle only indicating that he applied general leadership principles to himself and Apollos so that they might learn from them. In 4:6a he reveals what has been hidden in the previous section.

Excursus on 4:6b

The cryptic¹⁴⁷ formulation τὸ μὴ ὑπὲρ ᾧ γέγραπται has sparked at least two ingenious explanations. The first to mention is the conjecture that μή had been left out accidentally, so that the phrase is a gloss added to the text by a copyist who wanted to point out the proper position of μή in the text (above the α of ἵνα). This conjecture originated with J.M.S. Baljon¹⁴⁸ and has found some support.¹⁴⁹ Understood as a gloss the clause is dropped from the text in translation.¹⁵⁰ Still, because there is no textual evidence for the short version,¹⁵¹ the omission of μή and the addition of the gloss must have taken place very close to the original writing. Moreover, instead of our text “the glossator would almost surely have written τὸ μὴ ὑπὲρ τοῦ ᾧ γέγραπται.”¹⁵²

A second solution which has been brought forward is that the saying τὸ μὴ ὑπὲρ ᾧ γέγραπται stemmed from the practice of teaching children to write: they had to trace the letters first drawn by their teacher. If this is the case “Not beyond what is written” would refer to the beginners’ status of the Corinthians (cf. 3:1-2 and 4:14-16) and should be translated with “keep within the lines.” This option has been argued by a small number of exegetes.¹⁵³

We may have to resort to one of the above solutions when all else fails, but there remains an explanation, which requires much less speculation: Μὴ ὑπὲρ ᾧ γέγραπται preceded by τό is by a large majority of commentators understood as a principle or maxim with reference to Scripture, a maxim of rabbinical origin¹⁵⁴ or coined by Paul.¹⁵⁵ A

¹⁴⁷ Conzelmann 112: “unverständlich.”

¹⁴⁸ J.M.S. Baljon, *De Tekst der Brieven van Paulus aan de Romeinen, de Corinthiërs en de Galatiërs als voorwerp van de conjecturaalkritiek beschouwd* (Utrecht, 1884) 49-51.

¹⁴⁹ Bousset 76-7, Héring 28-9, and A. Legault, “Beyond the Things which are Written” (1 Cor. IV.6), *NTS* 18 (1971/72) 227-31.

¹⁵⁰ E. g. Willibrordvertaling (rev. ed.; 's Hertogenbosch: KBS, 1995).

¹⁵¹ The conjecture is not even discussed in Metzger, *Textual Commentary*.

¹⁵² Fee 168, n.15.

¹⁵³ J.T. Fitzgerald, *Cracks in an Earthen Vessel* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988) 123-7; M. Ebner, *Leidenslisten und Apostelbrief* (Würzburg: Echter, 1991) 33-6; R.L. Tyler, “First Corinthians 4:6 and Hellenistic Pedagogy,” *CBQ* 60 (1998) 97-103; the possibility is kept open by Witherington 141.

¹⁵⁴ Robertson-Plummer 81.

¹⁵⁵ Wolff 85; Hooker, “Beyond,” 127-32.

slogan of Paul's opponents is also possible (cf. 6:12a; 7:1) but unlikely.¹⁵⁶ Paul employs γέγραπται as a formula for citing Scripture.¹⁵⁷ Therefore, the readers are informed or reminded not to go beyond the teaching of Scripture in search of a higher wisdom or personal glory. The referent of ἃ γέγραπται could be Scripture in general¹⁵⁸ but in the context of 1 Cor 1–4 the statement almost certainly entails the Scripture quotations 1:19, 31; 2:9, 16; 3:19, 20. Among these quotations, some commentators give special importance to 1:31 or 3:19, 20 in particular.¹⁵⁹ The variant reading ὅ (D F G ~~Al~~ a) instead of ἃ probably resulted from the supposition that μὴ ὑπὲρ .. γέγραπται refers to a specific previous Scripture quotation.

The formula Μὴ ὑπὲρ ἃ γέγραπται is put forward as a controlling principle for the Corinthians, but may also be a principle which points the way to understand the text. Its function is not negative in the sense of purely restrictive, but also positive, as a guiding principle for understanding. With this formula Scripture is presented as the horizon within which 1 Cor 1–4 should be viewed. The listed citations form the concrete expression of Scripture in this particular textual unit.

The verse 4:6 functions as a hinge; it summarizes the preceding text in 4:6ab and announces the following discussion in 4:6c. The first part, 6a unveils something of the rhetorical procedure followed in 3:5–4:5 (or even 1:10–4:5). Paul is saying that what he writes about himself and Apollos has a wider scope. He is not just writing about himself and Apollos, but uses personal example to make clear what church leadership should look like. In the beginning he expressed his aim for the Corinthians with ἵνα τὸ αὐτὸ λέγητε πάντες (1:10), now he states with two purpose clauses ἵνα ἐν ἡμῖν μάθητε τὸ Μὴ ὑπὲρ ἃ γέγραπται (4:6b), asyndetically followed by ἵνα μὴ εἰς ὑπὲρ τοῦ ἐνὸς φυσιοῦσθε κατὰ τοῦ ἑτέρου (4:6c). Accordingly, 4:6 indicates that three themes featured in the preceding text, namely the right pattern for leadership (μάθητε ἐν ἡμῖν), the guiding role of Scripture (ἃ γέγραπται), and the rejection of exaggerated self-importance (μὴ φυσιοῦσθε). The example of the author's own leadership continues in 4:9–17 and the warning against arrogance occurs in 4:7–8 and returns at the end in 4:18–21.

¹⁵⁶ Weiss 102–3 remarks: “Es ist sehr unwahrscheinlich, dass man den Schriftgelehrten Paulus gegenüber, der eine solche Beflissenheit uns Fähigkeit zeigt, seine Lehre durch Schriftbeweis zu stützen, gerade diese Formel: “nicht über das hinaus, was geschrieben steht!” entgegengesleudert habe.”

¹⁵⁷ Lietzmann 19; Wolff 85; B. Dodd, *Paul's Paradigmatic 'I': Personal Example as Literary Strategy* (Sheffield: Academic Press, 1999) 46–7: “γέγραπται in each of its other 30 occurrences in Paul refers to Old Testament citations, and if it does not refer to Scripture in 1 Cor 4:6 this would be the only exception in Paul's usage.”

¹⁵⁸ Thus Schlatter 153; Lietzmann 19; Schrage 335.

¹⁵⁹ Robertson-Plummer 81; Wolff 85; Fee 169; Lindemann 102. Thiselton 354–5 and Schnabel 243 envisage both general Scripture and the quotations. J. R. Wagner, “Not Beyond the Things Which are Written: A Call to Boast Only in the Lord,” *NTS* (1998) 280, emphasizes the quotation 1:31 because it accords with 4:6c–7; Von Lips, *Traditionen*, 345 and Hooker, “Beyond,” 129 think primarily of 3:19–20 and secundarily also of the other quotations.

Chapter 4: Literary Structure

This chapter considers the literary structure of 1 Cor 1–4. While the next chapter focuses on the section's content, the present chapter takes a closer look at its literary form. It is natural to discuss intertextuality in connection with content than with form, because quotations are usually selected by an author on the basis of content and not of form. But it is, nevertheless, necessary to take form into consideration. The fact that the genre of the pre-text often differs from that of the receptor text may have an effect on the quotations and their new context. In our case quotations from e.g. prophetic literature are integrated in the literary form of the epistle.¹ In this chapter we seek to gain a better understanding of the literary structure of 1 Cor 1–4. The first part of the chapter deals with 'outer' questions (demarcations), the second part with the 'inner' questions of intention and arrangement. The latter depend on the section's rhetorical purpose.

1. Demarcations

The letter

The section 1 Cor 1–4 is part of the Corinthian literature. The two letters to Corinth differ in *Sitz im Leben* because the problems and the forms of opposition they deal with are not the same. In 1 Corinthians conflicts arise from within the community but in 2 Corinthians opponents of Paul who have arrived from elsewhere contest his apostleship. Accordingly, theories based on the supposition that the two letters address the same opposition have not withstood the test of time. Nonetheless, there is a continuity, the two letters share several important themes, and belong to the small corpus of Paul's Corinthian correspondence.²

Some view 1 Corinthians as a composition of smaller letters.³ Their theories⁴ are based on a number of observations. In the first place, there are disparate references to information received from Corinth. The letter mentions written communication (περὶ δὲ ὧν ἐγράψατε, 7:1) as well as oral reports (e.g. 1:11; ὅλως ἀκούεται 5:1; ἀκούω 11:18; πῶς λέγουσιν ἐν ὑμῖν τινες 15:12). It is argued that these reports reached Paul at different occasions and led him to write separate smaller letters. However, the group of messengers mentioned in 16:17–18 may just as well have conveyed all of these reports on

¹ That a change of genre contributes to 'quotation thresholds' is described in Chapter 7.3.4 and noted in Chapters 8.1.3, 9.1.3, and 10.1.4.

² Cf. R. Bieringer, "Zwischen Kontinuität und Diskontinuität. Die beiden Korintherbriefe in ihrer Beziehung zueinander," in *The Corinthian Correspondence* (ed. R. Bieringer; Leuven: University Press, 1996) 3–38.

³ E.g. Weiss XLII; Héring xiii–xiv; Fascher 42–6.

⁴ See tables with source analyses in J.C. Hurd, "Good News and the Integrity of 1 Corinthians," in *Gospel in Paul* (ed. L. A. Jervis and P. Richardson; Sheffield: Academic Press, 1994) 44–7.

their visit.⁵ Only in 1:11 another source of information – Chloe’s people – is mentioned. J.C. Hurd sums up: “1 Corinthians stands out among the other Pauline letters by containing at least two occasions for writing.”⁶

Secondly, the difference in tone throughout the letter could be the result of different occasions of writing. There is, for example, a striking change of tone in 7:1–11:1 after 5:1–6:20. In chapters 5–6 the apostle speaks authoritatively on moral issues, while in chapter 7 he admits that on certain questions he gives his personal view. In responding to some of their questions he has the Spirit (7:40) but does not have the authority of Christ (7:12, 25). According to Thiselton, the change of tone is explainable from rhetorical considerations.⁷ Paul speaks differently when he moves from clear-cut ethical decisions to pastorally sensitive issues. The change of subject matter may involve a shift of focus in terms of audience, as Paul himself distinguishes between ‘the weak’ and ‘the strong.’⁸

Thirdly, we meet with “the contradiction between chapter 4, where the apostle speaks of his imminent arrival, and 16, where he explains why his coming will be yet longer delayed,”⁹ However, as Merklein points out, his quick coming is not at all certain in 4:18–19 as is indicated by ἐὰν ὁ κύριος θελήσῃ.¹⁰ Moreover, Paul’s announcement of his coming is part of a warning and ταχέως expresses urgency rather than a moment in time.¹¹

There is now a near consensus on the literary unity of 1 Corinthians.¹² The disparity within the letter is understood as occasioned by the author’s different sources of information and the need to address a variety of problems.¹³ Strüder’s recent study concludes that present scholarly opinion considers the burden of proof to lie with those who defend partition theories.¹⁴

In the meantime 1 Cor 1–4 continues to have a somewhat exceptional position within the letter. Some even consider 1 Cor 1–4 to have been an independent letter¹⁵ or a letter resumed with 5:1 at a later moment after the arrival of new information.¹⁶ Yet, rather than having been composed separately, it seems more likely that the first four chapters form an introductory section to the rest of the letter or simply its first part. For

⁵ C.W. Strüder, *Paulus und die Gesinnung Christi* (Leuven: University Press, 2005) 27, suggests that when Stephanas c.s. brought the letter from Corinth, they also would have had an exchange with Paul about their home church.

⁶ Hurd, “Integrity,” 43.

⁷ Thiselton 36.

⁸ Thiselton 483–4.

⁹ Héring xiii.

¹⁰ BDR §371.4: ἐὰν with subjunctive as ‘Eventualis’; Wallace 696: third class condition: “uncertain of fulfillment, but still likely.”

¹¹ Merklein 332; Strüder, *Gesinnung*, 28.

¹² Conzelmann 17; Fee 15–6; Strobel 12; Schrage 63; Merklein 46–8; Wolff 7; Lindemann 5–6; Schnabel 41 with more references.

¹³ Wolff 7.

¹⁴ Strüder, *Gesinnung*, 30–5.

¹⁵ G. Sellin, “Das ‘Geheimnis’ der Weisheit und das Rätsel der ‘Christuspartei’ (zu 1 Kor 1–4),” *ZNW* 73 (1982) 72.

¹⁶ M. C. De Boer, “The Composition of 1 Corinthians,” *NTS* 40 (1994) 229–45.

our purposes, it is sufficient to agree that 1 Cor 1-4 is a separate section within 1 Corinthians.

Letter opening

1:1-3 is the epistolary prescript in which the author introduces himself as apostle of Jesus Christ because of his calling (Παῦλος κλητὸς ἀπόστολος). Christ is the one who called him and also the one who sent him (1:17). He addresses the audience in Corinth as a unity (τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ τῇ οὔσῃ ἐν Κορίνθῳ) and not as a bundle of factions even though the church may be on the brink of a factional existence, as has been reported (1:11). Of all Pauline writings only the Corinthian letters have in the address τοῦ θεοῦ added to ἐκκλησίᾳ. This shows a desire to emphasize that the Corinthian community is not owned or determined by any human leadership. Furthermore the church of Corinth is set within the larger ecumenical community of “all who call upon the name of the Lord” (1:2). In verse 3 the conventional greeting (χαίρειν) is recast in the Christian form of a benediction (χάρις ὑμῖν), made complete with the Jewish blessing εἰρήνη – ׀וֹלָךְ).¹⁷

1:4-9 functions as the introduction or *exordium*. In rhetorical theory, the main purposes of the *exordium* are to draw the attention of the audience and to generate a favorable disposition. Paul draws the attention of the readers by referring to subjects of special interest to his hearers. The Corinthians highly valued their gifts of speech and knowledge (1:5), as becomes evident in the body of the letter (especially chapters 8, 12 and 14). There is no direct effort to generate a favorable reception in 1:4-9. We should note, however, that the author presented his credentials in the opening of the letter in 1:1. He declares to be an apostle not of his own choice but because of the will of God.¹⁸ After the opening Paul often begins his letters with a thanksgiving. He thanks God for the addressees and this thanksgiving functions indirectly as a *captatio benevolentiae*,¹⁹ even though more precisely the object of thanksgiving is the work of God in the Corinthian community.²⁰

Strüder finds about as many occurrences of the words ‘Jesus’ and ‘Christ’ in 1 Cor 1-4 as in the rest of the letter and the introduction plays an important role in this statistic.²¹ In 1:1-9 the name ‘Jesus Christ’ occurs frequently (9 times in 9 verses). Apparently, Christology is important at the outset. D.L. Stamps speaks of a ‘Christological premise.’ The thanksgiving in 1:4-9 establishes a shared spirituality which is distinctly

¹⁷ Thiselton 81-4.

¹⁸ Cf. Lausberg, *Handbuch*, I 157, discussing the *exordium*: "Der Redner (literarisch: der Schriftsteller) lobt sich selbst dadurch, dass er seine obligatorische Berufstugend als *vir bonus* ins rechte Licht rückt. Er muss darauf hinweisen, dass er den Prozess aus moralisch wertvollen Motiven übernommen hat, also nicht gewerbsmässig, sondern als Zeuge der Wahrheit und im Interesse des Allgemeinwohls."

¹⁹ Lindemann 29;

²⁰ Schnabel 70 points out the frequent use of *passivum divinum*: δοθείση (v.4), ἐπλουτίσθητε (v.5), ἐβεβαιώθη (v.6), and ἐκλήθητε (v.9).

²¹ Strüder, *Gesinnung*, 126-7: Ἰησοῦς 14 times in 1 Cor 1-4 and 26 in the whole letter; Χριστός 29 times in 1Cor 1-4 and 64 in the whole letter.

Christocentric; in so doing, it establishes the basis upon which the sender and recipients relate through the letter.”²² This orientation provides the starting point for the readers to face the problems that will be revealed in the letter. R. Pickett defines these from a sociological angle as an ‘identity crisis’: “One way the interpersonal problems in the church can be explained is as an identity crisis which was the result of belonging to two discrepant universes of meaning. Membership in the Christian community entailed embracing a definition of reality and corresponding identity which ran counter to the everyday realities of the Greco-Roman world into which the Corinthian believers had been socialized.”²³

In 1:7b the participial phrase ἀπεκδεχόμενους τὴν ἀποκάλυψιν τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ introduces a rather unexpected outlook within the introduction. The eschatological perspective continues in verse 8 with the ‘day of our Lord Jesus Christ’, an expression that functions as the equivalent of the ‘day of the Lord’ in the Prophets. Furthermore, the faithfulness of God in verse 9 likely relates to the future as well.²⁴

Textual unit

If we want to implement an intertextual analysis of 1 Cor 1:10–4:21 then we need to know whether this section can be regarded as a textual unit. A number of considerations can be advanced in support of the unity of 1 Cor 1:10–4:21:

- 1) 1:10 begins with the exhortation παρακαλῶ and 4:16 the word returns introducing another directive. This gives the section a hortatory frame.
- 2) The final paragraph 4:14–21 has a personal tone of direct dialogue with the readers. The apostle describes his relationship with his readers as that of a father with his children (4:15). This agrees with the opening paragraph 1:10–17, where, for example, the author mentions the names of those whom he has baptized (1:14–16). The sections correspond in that 1:10–17 contains reminiscences of previous encounters in Corinth and 4:14–21 looks to future engagements.
- 3) 4:14–21 sounds like the end of a communication. The section contains a number of personal announcements, including Paul’s sending of Timothy and his own plan to visit the church.
- 4) 5:1 starts a new subject (πορνεία) introduced by mentioning the reception of information. This reminds one of the procedure in 1:11 and one could think of Chloe’s people (1:11) as the bearers of this information. Thiselton points at the parallel between the two passives ἀκούεται (5:1) and ἐδηλώθη (1:11).²⁵

²² D. L. Stamps, “The Christological Premise in Pauline Theological Rhetoric: 1 Corinthians 1.4–2.5 as an Example,” in S.E. Porter and D.L. Stamps, eds., *Rhetorical Criticism and the Bible* (London: Sheffield Academic, 2002) 455.

²³ R. Pickett, *The Cross in Corinth: The Social Significance of the Death of Jesus* (Sheffield: Academic Press, 1997) 62.

²⁴ P. von der Osten-Sacken, “Gottes Treue bis zur Parusie. Formgeschichtliche Beobachtungen zu 1 Kor 1: 7b–9,” *ZNW* 68 (1977) 176–99, who also argues that the eschatological expressions in 7b–9 form a tradition with πιστός ὁ θεός as key statement.

²⁵ Thiselton 385.

- 5) Chapters 5-7 deal with ethics. Except for the discussion of quarrels, ethics was not an issue in chapters 1-4.
- 6) The discussion of the major themes of 1 Cor 1-4 ends in chapter 4. This is clear in the case of the central theme of wisdom and the same pertains to the cross, strife, apostleship, and boasting.²⁶ Some topics return later: apostleship in chapter 9, communal strife in chapters 11-14.
- 7) Whereas in 1 Cor 1-4 the citations are from the Prophets and the Writings, the citations in 1 Cor 5-10:22 are taken from the Law.

A large majority of exegetes regards 1 Cor 1:10-4:21 as a textual unit. Smit recently spoke of a consensus on this point: "Scholars are unanimous in their opinion that 1 Cor. 1:10-4:21 forms a rounded and coherent unit within the first letter of Paul to the church at Corinth."²⁷ Consequently, we are on safe ground in taking 1 Cor 1:10-4:21 as a textual unit and specific object of study.

Patterns

The epistolary opening 1:1-9 with greeting and thanksgiving is clear enough but a segmentation of the remainder of 1 Cor 1-4 is "very difficult"²⁸. In general the outlines of commentaries arrange 1 Cor 1:10-4:21 according to the sequence of subject matter and not according to any criterion of form. Some, however, have observed concentric or chiasmic patterns in the text. *Chiasmus* is a literary feature frequently found in the Pauline literature. Especially words, phrases, and sentences may have a chiasmic pattern in Paul's letters.²⁹ The figure also functions as an ordering principle in several larger sections of his letters.³⁰ J. Weiss already noted the way textual units in 1 Corinthians are incorporated within other sections according to an ABA pattern. He mentions (as B elements) 2:6-16, 6:1-11 and the chapters 9 and 13.³¹ Furthermore, extended forms of more elements can be found, without (ABC/A'B'C') or with a central element as hinge (ABC/X/A'B'C'). The latter patterns are properly called concentric.³² K.E. Bailey has presented a very detailed

²⁶ 'Boasting' is mentioned again at the beginning of the next section (5:2).

²⁷ J.F.M. Smit, "'What is Apollos? What is Paul?' In Search for the Coherence of First Corinthians 1:10-4:21," *NovT* 44 (2002) 231. Likewise Merklein 98; Schrage 128: "Der erste und grösste Teil des Briefkorpus umfasst 1,10-4,21 und ist klar herausgehoben"; Thiselton 107: "There is general agreement that 1:10-4:21 constitutes an identifiable section." Fee 46-7 and Fitzmyer 57 dissent and group chapters 1-6 together.

²⁸ G. Sellin, "Das 'Geheimnis' der Weisheit und das Rätsel der 'Christuspartei'," *ZNW* 73 (1980) 72.

²⁹ I. H. Thomson, *Chiasmus in the Pauline Letters* (Sheffield: Academic Press, 1995). Blass Debrunner, *Grammatik*, par. 477; R. P. Martin, *2 Corinthians* (Waco: Word Books, 1982) 515 notes in his index at least 10 examples of *chiasmus* in 2 Corinthians.

³⁰ J. Jeremias, "Chiasmus in den Paulusbriefen," in *Abba* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1966) 276-90, esp. 285-90.

³¹ Weiss XLIII.

³² See J. Fokkeman, "Oog in oog met de tekst zelf," in *De Bijbel Literair* (ed. J. Fokkeman and W. Weren; Zoetermeer: Meinema, 2003) 16-9; also J. Fokkeman, *Dichtkunst in de Bijbel* (Zoetermeer: Meinema, 2000) 86-94. A concentric pattern in First Corinthians has been outlined

concentric pattern with regard to 1 Cor 1:17-2:2 but his proposal does not convince. Bailey has to declare many phrases redundant to the structure because they do not fit in his frame.³³

Conzelmann suggested a 'circular' composition of 1:18-3:23 in which "the section 3:18-23 leads back to the starting point."³⁴ Koch finds this circular composition strengthened by the fact that the Scripture quotations at the beginning and the end (1:19; 3:19b, 20) correspond with each other. The two citations at the end serve to summarize the section.³⁵ However, except for the opening and closing sections of 1:18-3:23, Conzelmann does not indicate the presence of other circles within this outer ring and as such, the figure is only an *inclusio*. Moreover, this arrangement leaves chapter 4 out of consideration. Schrage emphasized the need to include chapter 4 in the first division of the letter and points to a number of common topics in 1-3 and 4. The function of the apostles continues from 3:5 to 4:13, the eschatological note in 4:4, 8-13 is in harmony with 1:7-9, the polemic against the arrogant in 1:19, 31 and 3:21 continues in 4:6, 18-19, and the theme of wisdom surfaces again in 4:10.³⁶

It is remarkable that, even though 1 Cor 1-4 comes across as a unit, scholars did not arrive at a satisfying formal arrangement. In the recent period, however, exegetes have explored the rhetorical features of the text and it can be stated that the only kind of literary analysis that has been able to provide a plausible formal arrangement of 1 Cor 1-4 is rhetorical analysis.³⁷ Even though the suitability of rhetorical analysis is not generally accepted,³⁸ we proceed to test the value of this approach in the case of 1 Cor 1-4.

by C. Hill: "Paul's Understanding of Christ's Kingdom in 1 Corinthians 15:20-28," *NovT* 30 (1988) 297-320, esp. 298-303.

³³ K.E. Bailey, "Recovering the Poetic Structure of 1 Cor 1:17-2:2," *NovT* 17 (1975) 265-96.

³⁴ Conzelmann 57: "Dass man diesen Abschnitt als Einheit auffassen muss, zeigt die 'ringförmige Komposition'."

³⁵ D.-A. Koch, *Die Schrift als Zeuge des Evangeliums. Untersuchungen zur Verwendung und zum Verständnis der Schrift bei Paulus*. (Tübingen: Mohr, 1986) 273-5.

³⁶ Schrage 129-30; Sellin, "Geheimnis," 72-3, starts from Conzelmann's circular composition but modifies it considerably and his outcome is similar to Schrage.

³⁷ M. Becker, "Theologie zwischen Rezeption und Verkündigung – Argumentationsstrukturen in 1 Kor 1-4," in *Das Ende der Tage und die Gegenwart des Heils* (ed. M. Becker and W. Fenske; Leiden: Brill, 1999) 202: "Obwohl stets betont wird, dass 1 Kor 1-4 eine abgeschlossene Einheit darstellt, existieren bisher – sieht man von rhetorischen Ansätzen im Rahmen der Gliederung des Gesamtbriefes einmal ab – kaum Modelle, die eine durchgängig strukturierte Argumentation in diesen Kapiteln aufweisen können." The only other possible model Becker mentions is the abovementioned circular composition of Conzelmann (211 n.31). Becker's own proposal (204) of two different arguments 1:18-2:5 and 2:6-4:21 also remains unsatisfactory because of the inner divergences in the second argument. The transition from 2:5 to 2:6 is clear, but there is great difficulty to see 3:1-23 and 4:1-21 as explications of 2:6-16, as Becker does. The chapters 3 and 4 relate at least as much to 1:10-2:5 as to 2:6-16.

³⁸ Schnabel in his commentary (44-5) argues that recent research has shown that a rhetorical analysis of the whole letter is not possible, even though he leaves open this possibility for separate sections of the letter, offering as example chapter 15.

2. Rhetorical Analysis

Paul and rhetoric

The opening of the letter already made clear that Paul is able to combine his Jewish and Christian heritage with existing Greek literary forms. The composite greeting χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη is a case in point. A consideration of rhetorical structure has a rightful place here because we are dealing with a generally accepted first-century pattern of persuasive communication. Behind and within this text stands the author's desire to motivate, teach, and convince his audience. Even if Paul wanted to stay away from Greco-Roman rhetoric as an art or practice – as seems implied in 1:17 and 2:1–5 – a rhetorical evaluation of his letters is still valid. As Classen states, an author who wrote Greek also read Greek and consequently came, even if it was unconsciously, in touch with the rules of rhetoric.³⁹ Public speaking in the Greco-Roman world must have had some influence not only on Paul's speaking but also on his writing. Not only will rhetoric have played a role on Paul's part in the composition of the letter, the same is true for the readers – often, in practice, the hearers – in the way they listened to the letter.⁴⁰ Still we need to take into account some important objections to the use of rhetorical criticism for understanding the letters of Paul. The first objection deals with the scarcity of ancient sources on the subject. The second draws attention to the uncommon rhetorical situation, which characterizes the letters of Paul. A third issue to comment on is the difference between letters and speeches.

1) The handbooks on rhetoric offer us little information on the procedures of letter writing and discussions on letters outside these books are rare. When, for example, we look at the several steps entailed in composition, instruction is scarce. The five parts of Greek rhetorical theory, which correspond with the stages of making a speech, are: “*invention*, which deals with the planning of a discourse and the arguments to be used in it; *arrangement*, the composition of the various parts into an effective whole; *style*, which involves both choice of words and the composition of words into sentences, including the use of figures; *memory*, or preparation for delivery; and *delivery*, the rules for control of the voice and the use of gestures.”⁴¹ Memory and delivery are not applicable to letters in the form of written documents and of the other stages, we only read about style.⁴² Greco-Roman handbooks on rhetoric comment on the stylistic features of letters but say hardly anything on invention and arrangement.⁴³

³⁹ C.J. Classen, “Paulus und die antike Rhetorik,” *ZNW* 82 (1991) 4, 6.

⁴⁰ Witherington 39: “The evidence is considerable that Paul chose to cast his letters in rhetorical forms, that is, that he shaped them in accordance with formal oral speech, using rhetorical elements recognizable as such by his addressees.”

⁴¹ G.A. Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation through Rhetorical Criticism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984) 13–4.

⁴² F.W. Hughes, “The Rhetoric of Letters,” in *The Thessalonians Debate* (ed. K.P. Donfried and J. Beutler; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000) 207.

⁴³ J.A.D. Weima, “The Function of 1 Thessalonians 2:1–12 and the Use of Rhetorical Criticism,” in *The Thessalonians Debate*, 125; cf. also Classen, “Paulus,” 14.

2) The author expresses in 1 Cor 1-4 a view of public speaking, which seems at odds with rhetorical theory. According to Litfin, classical rhetoric is explicitly utilitarian and goal-oriented, seeking the approval of the listeners, while Paul (according to e.g. 1 Cor 2:1-5) does not strive for oratorical success. He considers himself a steward of the revealed mysteries of God (2:10, 4:1). Litfin typifies the role of the apostle as that of a herald: "It was not the herald's task to persuade, but to announce." He did not produce his own message but "carried the message of another."⁴⁴ This approach revealed itself not only in Paul's speaking but also in his conduct. In 2 Corinthians he responds to complaints about his unimpressive speech and 'weak presence' (2 Cor 10:10). This kind of presentation was not restricted to Corinth but also marked his demeanor in Thessalonica (1 Thess 2:1-13). Paul describes his εἰσοδος there as without deceit and with a preparedness to suffer. For him suffering and weakness are not disqualifications but a natural consequence of the message he brings. Thiselton summarizes: "Paul sees his apostleship not as an instrument of power but as a call to become a transparent agency through whom the crucified and raised Christ becomes portrayed through lifestyle, thought, and utterance."⁴⁵ Paul's personal presence should not be looked down on but should support an *ethos* of reliability. In the words of Kennedy: "*Ethos* means 'character' and may be defined as the credibility that the author or speaker is able to establish in his work. The audience is induced to trust what he says because they trust him, as a good man or an expert on the subject."⁴⁶ In one of the few remnants of ancient epistolary theory, we read: "In every form of composition it is possible to discern the writer's character (ἦθος), but in none so clearly as in the epistolary."⁴⁷

The First Letter to the Corinthians is not an isolated incident but part of an ongoing conversation. Another insight of ancient epistolary theory reminds us that, in fact, the letter offers us one side of a dialogue.⁴⁸ We only receive glimpses of the other side of the dialogue when Paul refers to a written or spoken report from Corinth. The names of church members in chapter 1 (Chloe, Crispus, Gaius, and Stephanas in 1:11, 14, 15) give the letter a personal touch. From the angle of ancient epistolography the Pauline letters have been classified as ancient *friendship letters*.⁴⁹ The more specific name *apostle-*

⁴⁴ A.D. Litfin, *St. Paul's Theology of Proclamation: 1 Corinthians 1-4 and Greco-Roman Rhetoric* (Cambridge: University Press, 1994) 246-51.

⁴⁵ Thiselton 45

⁴⁶ Kennedy, *Interpretation*, 15

⁴⁷ 'Demetrius,' *On Style* 4.227 (Roberts, LCL): ἔστι μὲν καὶ ἐξ ἄλλου λόγου παντὸς ἰδεῖν τὸ ἦθος τοῦ γράφοντος ἐξ οὐδενὸς δὲ οὕτως ὥς ἐπιστολῆς because the letter is a reflection of the writer's own soul (εἰκὼν τῆς ἑαυτοῦ ψυχῆς).

⁴⁸ 'Demetrius', *On Style*, 4. 223-4: εἶναι γὰρ τὴν ἐπιστολὴν οἷον τὸ ἕτερον μέρος τοῦ διαλόγου, with the difference that, while a conversation is immediate, a letter is prepared beforehand (ὑποκατασκευάσθαι) and needs to be sent "in a way as a gift." This also implies that a letter cannot be called back or withdrawn; like a gift it is left in the hands of the receivers to do with it what pleases them.

⁴⁹ J. Schoon-Janssen, "On the Use of Elements of Ancient Epistolography in 1 Thessalonians" in *The Thessalonians Debate*, 179-93.

*letter*⁵⁰ is also justified because the mission of the author determines the character of the letter. The designations *friendship letter* and *apostle letter* show that the *Sitz im Leben* of the Pauline letters differs from the rhetorical situation in ancient theory. The epistolary context is not just any assembly (ἐκκλησία), but the hearers constitute the city's ἐκκλησία τοῦ θεοῦ (1:2). In the political sphere there is hardly a personal relationship between speaker and audience but most of the readers of Paul's letters know him personally. The relationship between author and readers is one of authority (as apostle) and one of community (as fellow-believers). Expressed in family-language the bond is that of a father towards children (4:14, 15) as well as that of a brother towards brothers and sisters (1:10, 26; 2:1; 3:1, 4:6). The letter opens with affirming this common ground between the author and his readers.⁵¹

3) The difference between speeches and letters may discourage us from applying rhetoric to the letters of Paul. However, in Paul's view, the written and the spoken word are never far apart. Moreover, the context of church life does not allow the letter to become a material artefact as happens in a literary environment. Our modern preoccupation with writing and reading in a world of books and electronic information makes us prone to overlook the pervasive oral environment of ancient writing. The New Testament letters do not function in a literary but in an oral context. For example, when dictated to an amanuensis (cf. Rom 16:22), the letters obviously originate in speech. The content of the letters may also reflect oral teaching.⁵² Those who were familiar with the living voice of the author might recognize his way of speaking when reading his letter or hearing it read. Just like hearing Scripture, hearing a letter was common practice in the early Christian communities (cf. 1 Thess 5:27 and Col 4:16). It is likely that the person who brought the letter also read this letter in the presence of the audience. He or she was well aware of the author's intentions⁵³ and, given the inconvenient visual format of manuscripts with words run together and the lack of punctuation to indicate sentences or paragraphs, prior knowledge of the letter's content was not a luxury.⁵⁴ Moreover, compared to a written text, the spoken word also expresses the author's attitude and intentions. Speech has the facilities of intonation and facial expression.⁵⁵ In sum, oral delivery, loud reading, and the oral environment in general contributed to the

⁵⁰ Merklein 44-5.

⁵¹ A rhetorically effective speaker/author starts from premises shared with his audience/ readers. Cf. C. Perelman and L. Olbrechts-Tyteca, *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation* (Notre Dame and London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1969) 65.

⁵² cf. καθὼς πανταχοῦ ἐν πάσῃ ἐκκλησίᾳ διδάσκω (1 Cor 4:17).

⁵³ cf. Rom 16:2-3; Phil 2:25.

⁵⁴ P.J. Achtemeier, "Omne Verbum Sonat: The New Testament and the Oral Environment of Late Western Antiquity," *JBL* 109 (1990) 17.

⁵⁵ cf. 2 Jn 12. This may also be illustrated with Paul's sigh in Gal 4:20, "I wish I were now with you so that I could modify my tone." F.F. Bruce comments: "Paul may be afraid here that his Galatian friends will concentrate on the uncompromising severity of his language and overlook the underlying concern and affection." *The Epistle to the Galatians* (Exeter: Paternoster, 1982) 213.

understanding of Paul's letters. The ear is a sensitive organ for registering repetition, parallelism, changes in the formal pattern of expression and *inclusio*.⁵⁶

Another consequence of oral presentation is the need for textual amplification or expansion. It would be quite inadequate when listeners only heard a thesis stated and not expounded. The audience would have great difficulty to grasp the point in such a small compass. There is a need for amplification, which may take place through repeating basic ideas, by using different words, and by relating the theme to the audience.⁵⁷ 1 Cor 1:18–2:5 may be taken as a case of amplification or *ergasia* in developing the thesis of 1:18, first in general terms (1:19–25), then in terms of the audience (1:26–31), and finally in terms of the author (2:1–5).

It is only natural and to be expected that Paul's letters reflect some of the conventions of Greco-Roman society in the fields of letter writing and structuring speeches. The fact that little ancient theory on letter writing remains does not preclude the existence of conventions. Paul's own stance as a messenger⁵⁸ distinguishes him from an independent rhetor who is concerned with polishing his style in order to increase his reputation. A messenger wants to get his message across. But that does not mean that he expresses himself in the plainest form of speech. He will no doubt make use of those tools of rhetoric which contribute to his purpose. Paul himself indicates his use of rhetoric when he says ταῦτα μετεσχημάτισα in 4:6. With his claim to present a message οὐκ ἐν πειθοῖ σοφίας (2:4) he does not reject persuasion in itself but the persuasion which is governed by 'wisdom.' The fact that speaking and writing were close neighbors in an oral environment only encourages us to discover rhetorical patterns in Paul's letters.

Rhetorical genre

Aristotle's basic division of speeches remained normative in ancient rhetorical theory.⁵⁹ He distinguished τρία γένη τῶν λόγων τῶν ῥητορικῶν, συμβουλευτικόν, δικανικόν, ἐπιδεικτικόν. The *epideictic* (ἐπιδεικτικόν) genre wants to deepen values in society by praising good men and their actions and by denouncing what is worthless. According to the material collected by Lausberg, the aim of the epideictic genre is praise of beauty. The hearer does not listen in order to reach a judgment concerning the subject matter of the speech, but considers the speech as a specimen of the art of rhetoric either to be admired or to be rejected as lacking grace and style.⁶⁰ There was a tendency among Greek rhetoricians to treat all literature as a form of the epideictic genre to be analyzed in the first place in respect to style.⁶¹

⁵⁶ Achtemeier, "Verbum Sonat," 18.

⁵⁷ Kennedy, *Interpretation*, 22.

⁵⁸ He describes himself as "sent by Christ" (1:17) and as someone "entrusted with a commission" (οἰκονομίαν πεπίστευμαι, 9:17, cf. 4:1–2). See also chapter 6.7 on Apostleship.

⁵⁹ G.A. Kennedy, "The Genres of Rhetoric," in *Handbook of Classical Rhetoric in the Hellenistic Period* (ed. S.E. Porter; Leiden: Brill, 1997) 45.

⁶⁰ Lausberg I, 129–31.

⁶¹ Kennedy, "Genres," 45.

The *judicial* (δικανικόν) genre aims at justice or truth and involved prosecution or defense. Aristotle related the judicial genre to questions of the past, because the speech had to lead to a judgment by the audience on whether actions which had taken place were just or unjust. The audience had the position of a judge.⁶² The largest part of Greek rhetorical theory was devoted to judicial rhetoric and in the Roman environment this interest even increased.⁶³

Finally, the *deliberative* (συμβουλευτικόν) genre wanted to stimulate positive behavior and discourage bad courses of action. Its means are on the one hand exhortation and on the other dissuasion. It required from the political assembly (ἐκκλησία) the response whether some action was useful (συμφέρον) or harmful (βλαβερόν).⁶⁴ According to Aristotle this genre was especially directed to future action.

A close look at the Pauline letters reveals that we cannot simply classify them as belonging to one of the three traditional species or genres of speech: judicial, deliberative and epideictic. Kennedy observed regarding the writings of the New Testament that in a single discourse sometimes more than one genre is used. Still, one genre usually dominates in a discourse, depending on the author's main purpose in speaking or writing.⁶⁵ Paul would not be compelled to express himself in one particular genre, but a predominance of one of the genres is to be expected in his letters.

What about 1 Corinthians? Some observe in this letter the presence of the epideictic genre. They may find support in the fact that "most Greco-Roman letter types were associated with epideictic theory."⁶⁶ In the modern period, little attention was given to literary qualities of Paul's style but at the end of the 19th century Johannes Weiss drew attention to this aspect.⁶⁷ Smit interprets our textual unit as belonging to the epideictic genre.⁶⁸ He notes four types of epideictic encomia (eulogy): the paradoxical (ἐγκώμιον παράδοξον) in 1 Cor 1:18-31, the honourable (ἐγκώμιον ἔνδοξον) in 2:6-16, the ambivalent (ἐγκώμιον ἀμφίδοξον) in 3:5-23, and the dishonourable encomium (ἐγκώμιον ἄδοξον) in 4:6-13.⁶⁹ Nevertheless, the argument for dominance of the epideictic genre in 1 Cor 1-4 fails to convince. It is very unlikely that Paul wanted to

⁶² Lausberg I, 53-4.

⁶³ Kennedy, "Genres," 46: "Roman rhetoricians instinctively connected rhetoric with the law."

⁶⁴ Lausberg I, 54-5.

⁶⁵ Kennedy, *Interpretation*, 19.

⁶⁶ F.W. Hughes, "The Rhetoric of Letters," in *The Thessalonians Debate. Methodological Discord or Methodological Synthesis?* (ed. K.P. Donfried and J. Beutler; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000) 209.

⁶⁷ J. Weiss, "Beiträge zur paulinischen Rhetorik" in *Theologische Studien* (eds. E.R. Gregory et al.; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1897) 165-247: "Was dem Paulus so an Kunstprosa fehlt, ersetzt er, wenigstens in den sorgfältiger geschriebenen Briefen, durch eine gewisse rhetorische Bewegung, die entschieden packend und häufig durch Symmetrie, Rhythmus, Schwung und Vollklang nicht unkünstlerisch wirkt" (167).

⁶⁸ J.F.M. Smit, "Epideictic Rhetoric in Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians 1-4," *Biblica* 84 (2003) 184-201; See also on epideictic elements in 1 Corinthians: M.M. Mitchell, *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1991) 213-25.

⁶⁹ Smit, "Epideictic Rhetoric," 200.

restore his status and authority through a demonstration of his rhetorical ability.⁷⁰ In another situation Paul is able to recommend ὅσα εὐφημα and whatever deserves ἔπαινος (Phil 4:8) but the intention of his discourse of the cross in 1 Cor 1–4 appears to be at loggerheads with epideictic discourse (cf. 1:17; 2:1).

H.D. Betz has emphasized the use of the judicial genre in the letters of Paul.⁷¹ In his view Galatians is an ‘apologetic letter’, a self-apology of the apostle. This means that Paul is the defendant and the Galatians are the jury, while his opponents are the accusers.⁷² A recent defense of the judicial genre of 1 Corinthians has been presented by J.S. Vos.⁷³ Like others, Vos considers ‘divisions’ to be the main theme of 1 Cor 1:10–4:21 but in his view the quarrels in Corinth are not so much an inner church problem but a problem between church groups in their relationship to the apostles, especially Paul. This leads Paul to adopt a rhetorical strategy whereby he first agrees with his opponents that he does not have their kind of wisdom in 1:17–2:5 and then – as a pneumatic with a declaration of immunity – suddenly claims wisdom of a higher kind in 2:6–3:4. In the first section he presents himself as εἶρων, in the second as ἀλαζών. We are presented with a double *dissimulatio* in this shift from one extreme to the other.⁷⁴ Even though this interpretation represents a creative use of rhetorical analysis, it presupposes that self-defense is the central purpose of the apostle. Our rhetorical and thematic analysis does not bear this out.

When they take a look at 1 Cor 1–4 from a rhetorical angle most exegetes classify 1 Cor 1–4 as a specimen of the deliberative genre.⁷⁵ Only the fact that the letter contains much exhortation and dissuasion already indicates the use of this genre. Yet opinions differ whether 1 Cor 1–4 contains a separate argument. Some understand the letter as

⁷⁰ Smit, “Epideictic Rhetoric,” 201.

⁷¹ H.D. Betz, “The Literary Composition and Function of Paul’s Letter to the Galatians,” *NTS* 21 (1974–75) 353–79 and Betz, *Galatians* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979).

⁷² Betz, *Galatians*, 24; Note, however, his description of ancient rhetoric: “Rhetoric, as antiquity understood it, has little in common with the truth, but it is the exercise of those skills which make people believe something to be true. (...) The effectiveness of rhetoric depends primarily upon the naiveté of the hearer, rather than upon the soundness of the case. Rhetoric works as long as one does not know *how* it works” (Betz, *Galatians*, 24). This description is seriously onesided. Though Sophists would agree, Aristotle and the Stoics would not.

⁷³ J.S. Vos, “Weltliche und geistliche Rhetorik (1Kor 1,10–3,4),” in *Die Kunst der Argumentation bei Paulus* (Tübingen: Mohr, 2002) 29–64, which is an expanded version of the article “Die Argumentation des Paulus in 1 Kor 1,10–3,4,” in *The Corinthian Correspondence* (ed. R. Bieringer; Leuven: Peeters, 1996) 87–119. A moderate defense of the apologetic character of 1 Cor 1–4 gives N.A. Dahl, “Paul and the Church at Corinth According to 1 Corinthians 1:10–4:21,” in *Studies in Paul* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1977) 40–61.

⁷⁴ Vos, “Rhetorik,” 63, in summary: “Die ‘theologia crucis’ ist in diesem Rahmen ebenso wie die ‘theologia gloriae’ eine rhetorische Strategie, mit der Paulus auf das Hauptproblem, die Streitigkeiten und die Kritik an seinem Auftreten im Vergleich zu den anderen Aposteln, antwortet” (63).

⁷⁵ Kennedy, *Interpretation*, 87; Schrage 80; Witherington 46; Collins 192; Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 1, 20; cf. also Thiselton 41–52. Merklein 45 makes the general statement: “selbstverständlich ist das Grundanliegen aller Paulusbriefe zunächst einmal symbolleutisch-deliberativer Art.”

containing one single deliberative argument, whereby 1 Cor 1-4 is only a part of it. Thus, in Mitchell's view the several parts of the letter are all meant to serve the overall aim of church unity as one argument with many subsidiary proofs.⁷⁶ In response to Mitchell it should be stressed that we are not dealing with a speech but with a letter and letters need not restrict themselves to one argument. The author of a letter is free to address whatever he considers needful or relevant.⁷⁷ In 1 Corinthians different issues are dealt with, often in response to questions or reports (1:11; 5:1; 7:1 etc.). Separate parts of the letter may very well have separate arguments with rhetorical (deliberative) schemes of their own.⁷⁸ As will be shown in the next paragraph, we regard 1 Cor 1-4 as an independent rhetorical unit, with an argument of its own.

Dispositio

When we turn our attention to the section under consideration, we find that general agreement exists on the small segments which make up 1 Cor 1-4, namely 1:10-17, 18-25, 26-31, 2:1-5, 6-16, 3:1-4, 5-17, 18-23, 4:1-5, 6-13, and 14-21. But "when these segments are arranged into larger units considerable differences arise."⁷⁹ As has been argued in the preceding paragraphs a rhetorical analysis is the best way to make sense of the order of the pericopes. Such an analysis will help us to understand how the argument has been arranged in 1 Cor 1-4. The pericopes are related and one may note places of transition from one part of the argument to the following. We have to keep in mind that in ancient rhetoric practice often differed from theory. That is certainly no less the case in the letter writing practice of Paul. Nevertheless, the theory of ancient rhetoric does provide important clues for understanding the structure of 1 Cor 1-4.⁸⁰

The *ordo naturalis* of the *dispositio* according to ancient theory is: *exordium*, *narratio*, *argumentatio*, *peroratio*.⁸¹ It was possible to depart from this basic scheme, especially when a greater effort was necessary to ensure a receptive attitude among the audience. We have to keep in mind that the rhetorical handbooks⁸² focus on judicial rhetoric. Yet there is agreement between the deliberative and the judicial genres in the arrangement of content. The following rhetorical arrangement is justified by the development and content of 1 Cor 1-4 and contributes to an understanding of that text:

⁷⁶ Mitchell, *Rhetoric*, 202-7.

⁷⁷ Classen, "Paulus," 8, 29.

⁷⁸ Schrage 78.

⁷⁹ Smit, "Coherence," 232.

⁸⁰ As Collins 86-7 says: "Recourse to ancient rhetoric is useful. It provides us with a way of looking at Paul's letter that offers a different and insightful vantage point, but it must not be pushed to the extreme. The somewhat artificial categories of the manuals must not be superimposed on Paul's living communication to the Corinthians."

⁸¹ The corresponding Greek terms as used by Aristotle are προοίμιον, πρόθεσις, πίστις, and ἐπίλογος. The order is more detailed in some ancient theorists (Lausberg I 148-9).

⁸² Here represented by the material collected in Lausberg.

1:1-3	epistolary prescript	
1:4-9	epistolary exordium	
1:10-17	<i>narratio</i>	
1:18	<i>propositio</i>	
1:18-3:17	<i>argumentatio</i>	
	1:18-25	<i>probatio</i>
	1:26-31	<i>exemplum</i>
	2:1-5	<i>exemplum</i>
	2:6-16	<i>probatio</i>
	3:1-17	<i>probatio</i>
3:18-25	<i>peroratio</i>	
4:1-13	<i>refutatio</i>	
4:14-21	<i>peroratio</i>	

The letter integrates an epistolary and a rhetorical aspect. The letter opening has an epistolary character comparable with other ancient letters in general and in particular with the letters of Paul.⁸³ The starting point of the rhetorical unit is 1 Cor 1:10. Here begins the *narratio*.⁸⁴ The *narratio* consists of a short exposition of the facts of the situation; in this case, as more often, the unit contains a short historical review.⁸⁵ According to ancient theory in deliberative rhetoric the *narratio* should be kept short, no longer than necessary to set the stage.⁸⁶ 1:10-17 fulfils the aims of a *narratio* by setting the stage for the discussion and by correcting mistaken impressions or removing prejudice.⁸⁷ The *propositio* or the thesis of the *argumentatio* usually occurs at the point of transition from the *narratio* to the *argumentatio*. The *propositio* concludes the *narratio* and functions as an introduction to the *argumentatio*.⁸⁸ We will see that this is the case with 1:18, which follows from 1:17 (by resuming the terms λόγος and σταύρος) and introduces the central issue of discussion. The importance of 1:18 as thesis for the understanding of 1 Cor 1-4 will receive our attention in the next chapter when we deal with divisions and wisdom.⁸⁹ The *argumentatio* is the central and determining part,⁹⁰

⁸³ See section 1.2 of this chapter.

⁸⁴ Likewise Mitchell, *Paul*, 200-1; Schrage 134-5; Witherington 98-9; Cf. also Thiselton 94, 149 who, however, is reluctant to assign a rhetorical arrangement to Paul's letter.

⁸⁵ Lausberg I 163-64. Bünker and Merklein take 1:10-17 as rhetorical *exordium* and 1:18-2:16 as *narratio*. However, this choice makes it necessary to assume that the letter begins with both an epistolary (1:4-9) and a rhetorical (1:10-17) *exordium*. (M. Bünker, *Briefformular und rhetorische Disposition im 1. Korintherbrief* [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1984] 53-56; Merklein 109-11).

⁸⁶ Lausberg, *Handbuch* I 169-71

⁸⁷ Mitchell, *Paul*, 201

⁸⁸ Lausberg I 189.

⁸⁹ The long list in Strüder, *Gesinnung*, 73 shows that 1:10 is generally regarded as rhetorical *propositio*. Therefore our choice of 1:18 as *propositio* needs to be defended. See chapter 5.1 and 2.

consisting out of several examples or proofs. The *argumentatio* contains exhortation as well as teaching.⁹¹ The arrangement (*dispositio*) given here largely agrees with comments on the rhetorical disposition in Schrage's commentary.⁹² Bünker and Merklein largely agree with the pattern we give to 1 Cor 3–4.⁹³

The *argumentatio* makes use of various means. We encounter the use of two *exempla* in 1:26–31 and 2:1–5, which illustrate and support the thoughts formulated in 1:18–25. Furthermore, the *argumentatio* can be specified as containing the elements of *probatio* (positive argument) and *refutatio* (refutation of opposing views). These elements are discernable in 1:18–3:17 (*probatio*) and in 4:1–13 (*refutatio*). This *refutatio* seriously questions the attitudes and ideas of the Corinthians by means of irony. In rhetorical theory the *peroratio* may either summarize the subject matter already discussed or encourage a positive response of the audience.⁹⁴ These two aims find expression in two separate pericopes. The first *peroratio* (3:18–23) refreshes the memory with a recapitulation and the final *peroratio* (4:14–21) includes an appeal for decision or action. That the *peroratio* is found in two pericopes, separated by a last segment of the *argumentatio*, does not mean that the rules of ancient rhetoric are irrelevant, but that the author is not restricted by convention in the presentation of his argument. The form used depends partially on rhetorical and literary conventions and partially on occasion and content. The occasion is the need felt by the author in his capacity as apostle to communicate to a particular troubled church. The content of 1 Cor 1–4 is rich and varied and will be discussed in the next chapter by looking at the most important themes.

⁹⁰ Lausberg I 190.

⁹¹ Lausberg I 182–4: *docere* is the centre of gravity of the *argumentatio* (190).

⁹² Schrage 167, 204, 311, 352.

⁹³ Bünker, *Briefformular*, 56–8; Merklein 110–2; The arrangement of Von Lips (*Weisheitliche Traditionen im Neuen Testament* [Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1990] 326) has little plausibility because it is difficult to retain the idea of a rhetorical structure when the *narratio* occurs three times.

⁹⁴ Lausberg I 236–40.

Chapter 5: Thematic Structure

There was sufficient evidence to discern a rhetorical structure in 1 Cor 1–4. This chapter turns from an emphasis on form to content and contemplates the thematic structure or the development of themes within the section. We deal with them in order of appearance, adding the verse where they first occur: divisions (1:10), wisdom (1:17), the word of the cross (1:18), boasting (1:28), the Spirit (2:4), building (3:9), and apostleship (1:1, made into a theme in 1 Cor 3–4). A theme is a topic that receives more than casual discussion; a theme gives an important contribution to the meaning of the whole. If one of the themes were omitted, the text as a whole would suffer. This chapter will also answer the question whether one can speak of a leading theme. Presently we face a near consensus, which says that the subject of DIVISIONS or, in other words, a CALL TO UNITY is central to 1 Cor 1–4.

1. Divisions

That most commentators regard DIVISIONS as the obvious theme of 1 Cor 1:10–4:21 is already evident from the headings above this section in the commentaries.¹ What are the arguments for taking DIVISIONS as central theme? The first argument concerns the strife and partisanship that plague the church. The literal expression ‘strife’ is found in 1:11 (ἔριδες) and 3:3 (‘jealousy and strife’, ζήλος καὶ ἔρις). That this strife is related to partisanship is reasonably deduced from 1:12 and from the warning against σχίσματα in 1:10: “I urge you, ... not to allow divisions among yourselves.” A second argument for DIVISIONS as the main theme is the choice of 1:10 as the *propositio* of 1 Cor 1:10–4:21, as the thesis that expresses the leading theme to which other themes contribute. For M. Mitchell 1:10 is not only the thesis for 1 Cor 1:10–4:21 but for the whole letter. She interprets the whole of 1 Corinthians as a deliberative speech calling for unity in line with ancient political rhetoric. The tenability of this view with regard to 1 Cor 1–4 needs to be questioned.² There are a number of objections: 1) the common terms used in the rhetoric for unity (στάσις and ὁμόνοια) are not used in the text and 2) Pauls uses the term σχίσματα in his own way; it does not belong to contemporaneous Greek rhetoric calling for unity. 3) Divisions are accepted as unavoidable in 1 Cor 11:18–19.

¹ Cf. Bachmann, J. Weiss, Robertson-Plummer, Lietzmann, Conzelmann, Fascher, Wolff, Thiselton, Schnabel, and Fitzmyer.

² Cf. C.W. Strüder, *Paulus und die Gesinnung Christi. Identität und Entscheidungsfindung aus der Mitte von 1 Kor 1–4* (Leuven: Peeters, 2005) 65: “Mitchells These haftet ... ein einseitiger Grundzug an, der zu einer Ausblendung anderer in 1Kor vorhandener Themenbereiche führt, welche nicht unmittelbar im Zusammenhang der Einheitsproblematik stehen. Bezogen auf die Kapitel 1–4 ist es etwa signifikant, dass das Thema um Kreuz und Weisheit bei Mitchell nahezu keine Rolle spielt bzw. allein auf den Zweck der Einheit hin (um)gedeutet wird. Ob damit der Abschnitt 1,18–2,16 in seiner grundsätzlichen Bedeutung für das paulinische Evangelium zureichend gewürdigt ist, erscheint zweifelhaft.”

1) Terms that one would expect in the case of a deliberative speech for unity – e.g. στάσις and its counterpart ὁμόνοια that abound (resp. 9 and 13 times) in an early Christian writing like the First Epistle of Clement (also addressed to Corinth)³ – are not found in 1 Corinthians. The political term στάσις is used in the NT (e.g. in Acts) but not in Paul. The noun ὁμόνοια and the verb ὁμονοέω are absent from the New Testament. In the LXX the noun appears a number of times.⁴ However, it does not have a positive value in itself. All depends on the purpose it serves: there is a ὁμόνοια πονηρίας,⁵ as well as positively a concord in the keeping of Gods law.⁶ The verb ὁμονοέω occurs three times in the Septuagint. In Lev 20:5 it has a bad sense (the agreement among Moloch’s supporters); the same is true for Es 4:17^s (the unity among Haman’s helpers).⁷ In the case of 1 Corinthians, Paul’s purpose expressed in ‘be united in the same mind’ (ἦτε κατηρτισμένοι ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ νοῷ) does not call for an unspecified political goal of ὁμόνοια but describes his goal as sharing in ‘the mind of Christ’ (νοῦς Χριστοῦ, 2:16).⁸ This ‘mind of Christ’ is not a general social value, but a distinctive mark of Christ’s community.

2) The centrality of the theme of divisions has also been supported by the fact that 1 Corinthians repeatedly speaks of the danger of σχίσματα. This term occurs only in this letter (1:10, 11:18 in the plural and 12:25 in the singular) within the Pauline corpus, but it is not a common term in the political sphere.⁹ The metaphorical use of the noun, with the meaning ‘division’, is not established prior to Christian texts. The verb σχίζειν (in the figurative sense: act. ‘cause division’ or pass. ‘become divided’) occurs sporadically in Greek literature,¹⁰ but is not found with this sense in the LXX, or the synoptic Gospels.¹¹

³ See also G. Dellings, “στάσις,” *TWNT* 4: 569; W.C. van Unnik, “First Century A.D. Literary Culture and Early Christian Literature,” *NedTT* 25 (1971) 40: The author of First Clement himself “gives two characterizations of his writing: in 63:2 as a treatise ‘on peace and concord’ which is a typical combination in Greek literature to describe speeches and writings that try to put an end to that ‘Greek malady’ in civil affairs called *stasis* (sedition, party strife) – in 58:2 as a *symbolou*, an ‘advice.’” Συμβουλή is the technical term that gave rise to the *symbolleutic* or deliberative genre of rhetoric.

⁴ HR gives 8 places, of which 3 in 4 Maccabees.

⁵ Wis 10:5; cf. Ps 82:5; cf. Philo, *Conf.* 150 ascribing to the unjust builders of the tower of Babel (Gen 11:5) ἁρμονία καὶ συμφωνία.

⁶ Wis 18:9; also Sir 25:1: ὁμόνοια ἀδελφῶν.

⁷ The verb ὁμονοέω also occurs in the vision of Dan 2:43 LXX, where the feet of the large human image consist out of a mixture of iron and clay. These feet portray a lack of concord among men (οὐκ ἔσονται δὲ ὁμονοοῦντες οὔτε εὐνοοῦντες ἀλλήλοις).

⁸ Mitchell, *Paul*, 78 does consider the question whether νοῦς Χριστοῦ is Paul’s Christian counterpart to Greco-Roman political ὁμόνοια.

⁹ LSJ, s.v., It is mostly used in a material sense as for the cleft of a hoof or the rent of a garment.

¹⁰ Herodotus VII 219,2 is a good example: Ἐνθαῦτα ἐβουλεύοντο οἱ Ἕλληνες καὶ σφεων ἐσχίζοντο αἱ γυνῶμαι.

¹¹ Mitchell, *Paul*, 72-73; C. Maurer, “σχίζω, σχίσμα,” *TWNT* 4:959-65; *LSJ*, s.v. The Gospel of John, which is considerably later in time, is the only other NT book which has σχίσμα in the metaphorical sense (7:43, 9:16 and 10:19). The term describes the inevitable effect of the word

We conclude that warning against σχίσματα is not standard terminology in deliberative rhetoric. Paul could hardly depend on rhetorical tradition in this respect and must have applied some creative freedom in addressing the real or potential divisions in the Corinthian church.

3) The issue of divisions and the term σχίσματα return later in the letter in 11:18–19 in connection with concrete situations for which the Corinthians come together. A relationship with 1:10–12 seems natural.¹² Then it becomes clear that the call for unity in 1:10 does not receive full support in 11:18, because the report of σχίσματα is followed by the remark “for there must be factions (αἰρέσεις)¹³ among you in order that the approved become evident among you” (11:19). Mitchell and others interpret this saying not as a serious statement but as a sigh of resignation.¹⁴ However, Paul’s remark is probably serious. The idea is also found in Ἔσονται σχίσματα καὶ αἰρέσεις, an *agraphon* with an eschatological sense, which follows the warning “many will come in my name” (cf. Matt 24:5) in Justin, Dial. 35.3.¹⁵ Moreover, the expression δεῖ refers to eschatological necessity (cf. 1 Cor 15:53; 2 Cor 5:10). This means that “Paul probably sees their present divisions as part of the divine ‘testing/sifting’ process already at work in their midst. Such divisions are not a good thing, but they are an inevitable part of the Eschaton.”¹⁶ According to J. Dupont the σχίσματα or αἰρέσεις in 11:18–19 are not only a necessary element of the eschatological drama – with as positive purpose to be proven δόκιμος – but also a form in which the community (like the apostle in 4:9–13) participates in the cross of Christ.¹⁷

We conclude that the call to unity in 1 Cor 1–4 is not an unqualified one. Unity in itself can hardly be the central goal as might be guessed from regarding 1:10 as a

and mission of Jesus on his hearers (cf. C.K. Barrett, *The Gospel According to John* [2nd ed.; London: SPCK, 1978] 331).

¹² Paul’s qualification καὶ μέρος τι πιστεύω seems to be at odds with his confidence in the report of Chloe’s people in 1:11 but this does not amount to a clear contradiction. A connection between 1:10–12 and 11:18–19 is affirmed by Lietzmann 55–6, Wolff 259, and Lindemann 250 against Weiss 278.

¹³ In this context αἰρέσεις agrees in meaning with σχίσματα (Conzelmann 235 n.13; Wolff 260; Lindemann 250; Schnabel 634).

¹⁴ Mitchell, *Paul*, 153: “1 Cor 11:19 may be a further, more honest concession by Paul to the realities of political life – the inevitability of factions” (Also Lietzmann 56). Thiselton 858 takes 1 Cor 11:19 as a citation of a maxim used by an elitist group in Corinth and Bousset 110 combined irony and citation: Paul ironically repeats a confident saying of church members.

¹⁵ The saying is also found in diverse other sources (Syr. Didasc. 6.5.2 and Ps.–Clem. 2.17.4; 16.21.4; cf. Fee 538; Wolff 260; J. Jeremias, *Unbekannte Jesusworte* (Gütersloh: Mohn, 1983) 74–5).

¹⁶ Fee 538–9; Collins 422: “Early Christians were convinced that divisions were not only necessary; they were also a penultimate reality. As a harbinger of the eschaton they proclaimed the imminence of judgment and the revelation of those who are faithful (cf. 3:13–14).” See Matt 10:34–36, etc. Likewise H. Schlier, “αἰρέομαι αἵρεσις,” *TWNT* 2:182; Wendland 84; Witherington 248; Wolff 260; Kümmel in the supplement to Lietzmann 185 refers the test to the final judgment: “das Auftreten von Spaltungen dient der klaren Scheidung beim Gericht (3:13).”

¹⁷ J. Dupont, “Reflections de saint Paul à l’adresse d’une Eglise divisée,” in *Paolo a una Chiesa Divisa (1 Co 1–4)* (ed. L. De Lorenzi; Rome: Abbazia di S. Paolo, 1980) 219–37, esp. 231.

programmatic exhortation and rhetorical *propositio* of 1 Cor 1:10–4:21. A number of terms, especially in 1:10–13, may have political connotations but we question whether a partially shared vocabulary is sufficient to interpret 1 Corinthians or 1 Cor 1–4 as a call to unity in the manner of political speeches of the time. Much depends on the way an author *uses* words.¹⁸ To complicate things further, the call to unity in 1 Cor 1:10 is followed in 1:18 by the divisive effect of the word of the cross. Apparently, the apostolic preaching is not a simple and direct road to unity; it is a message that meets with refusal as well as assent. It does not fall in line with but flaunts common cultural and religious values (1:26–31). One cannot see the call for unity in 1:10 apart from the situation created by the gospel in 1:18. Moreover, unity is not only a goal (1:10) but also a given (1:1–9) in our text. This unity is consistently specified as ‘in Christ’ as clearly illustrated in ὑμεῖς ἐστε ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ (1:30), and ὑμεῖς δὲ Χριστοῦ, Χριστὸς δὲ θεοῦ (3:23).

The rhetorical analysis in Chapter 4 has explained 1:10–17 as *narratio* within 1 Cor 1:10–4:21. The *narratio* often provides information about the situation in the present and the past, and may mention the names of some of the persons involved.¹⁹ In this pericope we hear indeed that the apostle is informed about quarrels (ἔριδες) in the community of believers (1:11) and that there are those who side with a party or a leader; some use the name of Paul and others the names of Apollos and Cephas. The section 1:10–17 starts in verse 10 with a solemn exhortation, calling for unity “in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Over against the names of human leaders, made so much of in Corinth, the apostle emphatically speaks of one name, that of Christ, as he already did in 1:2: believers are “all those who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ”²⁰ (cf. also 5:4 and 6:11). The absurdity of uniting under the banner of other names is exposed in 1:13 and 15.

That this partisanship was widespread in Corinth is suggested by the word ἑκάστος. If we take this word at face value the church gives the impression of a Greek democracy in which everybody chooses his party.²¹ But ‘each’ here is a term which illustrates the general desire found in Corinth to attach oneself to one of the respected names.²² Paul reacts vigorously against this practice by means of rhetorical questions in verse 13 and irony in the verses 14–15. Whether we take the phrase “and I belong to Christ” as an exclamation of Paul or not,²³ the questions fired at the readers in verse 13

¹⁸ cf. H. Weder, *Neutestamentliche Hermeneutik* (Zürich: Theologischer Verlag, 1986) 261: “Der Sprachgebrauch eines Autors kann also frühestens auf der Ebene seiner Sätze lokalisiert werden, nicht schon auf die Ebene seiner Wörter. Diese generelle hermeneutische Regel ist von grundsätzlicher Relevanz für den Vergleich des Neuen Testaments mit seiner Umwelt.”

¹⁹ Lausberg, *Handbuch* I 165–6: *narratio* in the form of *historia*.

²⁰ Schrage 105: “Der Name ist auch hier nicht Schall und Rauch, sondern repräsentiert Wirklichkeit und Gegenwart, Stellung und Würde der benannten Person, ist also Inbegriff und Vergegenwärtigung Jesu Christi, der als Erhöhter präsent ist.”

²¹ Bachmann 63: “als ob jeder dem alten Gesetz gehorche, durch das einst Solon den Staatsbürgern zur Pflicht gemacht haben soll, Partei zu ergreifen.”

²² In 11:21 ἑκάστος refers to a lack of social concern (ἑκάστος τὸ ἴδιον δεῖπνον προλαμβάνει).

²³ The origin of this phrase is particularly difficult to determine. Exegetes disagree or remain indecisive. There is no textual evidence for its being the gloss of a copyist. It is possible that some church members used the phrase (cf. 2 Cor 10:7). Yet, more likely, we deal with a reaction of

direct the discussion explicitly (“Is Christ divided?”), and implicitly (“Paul is not crucified for you, is he?”) towards Christ. The first question points back to the preceding two verses and the second points forward to ‘the cross of Christ’ in 1:17. The third question “Are you baptized in the name of Paul?” is explicated in an aside (*digressio*) in the verses 14–16. Baptism is not mentioned again so that it does not become an issue in 1 Cor 1–4.²⁴

The theme of divisions returns in 3:1–5 and we find that elements of 1:10–17 come back in that segment:

1:11 ἔριδες ἐν ὑμῖν εἰσιν	3:3 ἐν ὑμῖν ζῆλος καὶ ἔρις,
.....	3:4 ὅταν γὰρ λέγῃ τις,
1:12 ἕκαστος ὑμῶν λέγει,	Ἐγὼ μὲν εἰμι Παύλου,
.....	ἕτερος δέ, Ἐγὼ Ἀπολλῶ,
Ἐγὼ μὲν εἰμι Παύλου,	
.....	
Ἐγὼ δὲ Ἀπολλῶ,	οὐκ ἄνθρωποι ἐστε;
.....	3:5 τί οὖν ἐστὶν Ἀπολλῶς;
Ἐγὼ δὲ Κηφᾶ,	τί δέ ἐστιν Παῦλος;
Ἐγὼ δὲ Χριστοῦ.	
1:13 μεμέρισται ὁ Χριστός;	
μὴ Παῦλος ἐσταυρώθη ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν;	
.....	
ἢ εἰς τὸ ὄνομα Παύλου ἐβαπτίσθητε;	
.....	

1 Cor 1:11 and 3:3 identify the problem of strife. The following verses (1:12 and 3:4) indicate that strife manifests itself in aligning oneself with human leaders. Paul’s reaction in both passages comes in the form of rhetorical questions but 3:4–5 takes the matter further than 1:13–16. This is possible because 3:4–5 presupposes the intervening discussion in 1:17–3:2. The question οὐκ ἄνθρωποι ἐστε seems enigmatic and is translated with “are you not mere men” (NIV) or the like. M. Mitchell understands the argument as a *topos* in Greco-Roman literature: “that factionalism is a ‘human’ failing.”²⁵ However, the ‘human’ here has to be understood from the preceding argument in 1 Cor 2 and the meaning of the question is: Does this not show that you are operating on the purely human level not as πνευματικοί but in opposition to the πνεῦμα τοῦ θεοῦ?²⁶ The question is at the centre of a small-scale concentric pattern *Paul – Apollos – men – Apollos – Paul*. The term ἄνθρωποι has to be understood in the light of 1:25, 29 and 2:13, 14, where an opposition has been introduced, respectively between θεός and

Paul, since he continues in v.13 with three rhetorical questions. Here we acutely sense that we miss out on the original oral delivery!

²⁴ We have no certainty, but the remarks in verses 14–16 may suggest that the Corinthians assumed that a relationship existed between the baptizer and the person who had undergone baptism; such an opinion could be a factor in the divisive tendencies in the Corinthian church.

²⁵ Mitchell, *Paul*, 82.

²⁶ Cf. Merklein 251–2.

ἄνθρωπος and between πνευματικός and ψυχικός. In 3:3–4 Paul interprets the divisive behavior of the Corinthians as ‘human’ in the sense of ‘opposed to God,’ and ‘fleshly’ as ‘opposed to spiritual’. The connection between party strife and the whole discussion on wisdom had not been explained in 1:17, but now by means of οὐκ ἄνθρωποί ἐστε in 3:4 the theme of party strife is made to converge with human wisdom or ‘the wisdom of this world.’ Ἄνθρωποί εἶναι summarizes the basic position of the Corinthians, as became evident from their quarrelling. It concerns the vantage point from which they view life and is more fundamental than an ethical failure as expressed in κατὰ ἄνθρωπον περιπατέω in 3:3. Later in the chapter, in 3:21 the idea of ‘human’ in opposition to God returns and is then connected with ‘boasting’ (ὥστε μηδεὶς καυχάσθω ἐν ἀνθρώποις).

The word ἑκάστος as expression of foolish allegiance in 1:12 also returns in chapter 3 but now in a positive sense. The pronoun no longer serves in the context of divisive speech, but is enlisted in the service of constructive action in 3:5, 10. It is the personal responsibility of each leader to build the community. “Each will receive his own reward and the fire will test each man’s work” (3:8, 13). The term is put in an eschatological perspective; when the Lord comes “each person will receive recognition from God” (4:5).

2. Wisdom

After DIVISIONS, WISDOM features as a major theme in the first chapters of our letter. J. Weiss summarizes 1:18–3:23 with the heading "Das Evangelium und die Weisheit der Welt," a heading which he considers valid because – after a seeming absence in 3:1–17 – in 3:18–23 the theme returns. In 1:10 one first encounters DIVISIONS and in 1:17 a transition from DIVISIONS to WISDOM takes place. This unexpected shift deserves careful attention: in 1:17 we meet with two negations. Both are emphatic and both introduce a shift. The first negation οὐ γὰρ ἀπέστειλén με Χριστὸς βαπτίζειν ἀλλὰ εὐαγγελίσεσθαι moves the attention from one sphere of activity to another, from baptizing to proclaiming the gospel. The second negation οὐκ ἐν σοφίᾳ λόγου is of interest because it introduces the term σοφία in the discussion. ‘Wisdom’ is a new subject; it did not even appear in the *exordium* along with the gifts of λόγος and γνῶσις (1:5). After 1:10–17 we would expect something like οὐκ ἐν διχοστασίᾳ²⁷ instead of οὐκ ἐν σοφίᾳ λόγου. But, without giving motives, the author broaches a new subject in 1:17.

The apostle refuses to present the gospel ἐν σοφίᾳ λόγου. This refusal surprises because wisdom is a favourite category in the Hellenistic world, as is well summarized with “Greeks seek wisdom” in 1:22. Wisdom would be a suitable vehicle to convey a new universal truth like the gospel. But, in defiance of such expectations, in 1 Cor 1:18–25 the author explicitly refuses to use the language of wisdom. Instead, he starts a confrontational dialogue with ‘the wisdom of the world.’ A probable reason for the appearance of wisdom in the text is that ‘wisdom’ itself was part of the problem of quarrels and partisanship. Striving after wisdom and a divisive spirit had apparently

²⁷ Cf. the textual variant in 3:3.

conspired in Corinth whereby socio-cultural conditions may explain this connection between wisdom and strife.²⁸

We may go a step further and suggest that not divisions but wisdom was the weightier issue in Corinth or even *the* issue, the root of the problems.²⁹ A vast array of religious-philosophical ideas and practices were on offer in a multicultural harbour city located halfway the Mediterranean Sea and it is likely that in this environment Corinthian church members were attracted to some form of Jewish-Hellenistic wisdom.³⁰ We have to keep in mind, however, that the text itself does not explain why the subject of wisdom is introduced.³¹ Accordingly, it should not surprise us that the text is not explicit either about the Corinthians' ideas on wisdom. As J.-N. Aletti remarks, Paul does not respond directly to queries but relocates questions, enlarges the discussion so that we are left in the dark about the exact position of his opponents.³² His opponents are addressed but probably not in a way they had expected. An example of this way of putting things may be the 'covert allusion' expressed in 4:6.³³

3. The Word of the Cross

In 1 Cor 1-4 there is not only a concentration of wisdom words, but the words 'cross' (1:17,18) and 'crucify' (1:13, 23; 2:2, 8) also feature frequently. Outside the Gospels the verb 'crucify' occurs only here, once in 2 Corinthians (13:4), in Galatians (3:1; 5:24; 6:14), and once in Revelation (11:8). The noun 'cross' is absent in Romans, 1 and 2 Thessalonians and the rest of the Corinthian correspondence.

²⁸ According to B.W. Winter, "Secular Discipleship and Christian Competitiveness," in *After Paul Left Corinth. The Influence of Secular Ethics and Social Change* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001) 31-43, pupils "were encouraged to be extremely zealous (ζήλος) in demonstrating their loyalty to their teacher, promoting his professional attributes as an orator and his educative prowess. At the same time they created strife (ἔρις) by means of trenchant criticism of perceived deficiencies of other teachers (39)." "1 Corinthians 1-4 provides important evidence of the inroads of secular perceptions of the Christian disciple's relationship to his teachers, Paul and Apollos (41)." This lends significance to the fact that Paul "never addressed the Corinthians or any other members of the congregations he founded as his disciples (43)."

²⁹ Fee 64: "The argument that follows shows that σοφία is the real issue," even though "what exactly the Corinthians would have meant by it is a matter of considerable debate."

³⁰ For a discussion of the religious background of Corinthian wisdom, see chapter 6.

³¹ Paul does not say anything like "Now concerning (Περὶ δὲ) wisdom .." in the way he announces other themes which had been brought to his attention by the Corinthians (cf. 7:1,25; 8:1; 12:1), apparently through their official delegation (cf. 16:17-18). It seems likely that the issue of wisdom was conveyed by the obscure people of Chloe, who also informed him about the quarrels (1:11). The order of the letter shows that their information was more urgent to Paul than questions brought to him via official communications.

³² Jean-Noël Aletti, "Sagesse et Mystère chez Paul," in *La Sagesse Biblique de l'Ancien au Nouveau Testament* (Paris: Editions de Cerf, 1995) 357-84, 363.

³³ See chapter 3, Excursus on 4:6a.

The theme of the cross appears immediately after wisdom in the form of σοφία λόγου. Somehow the two themes of wisdom and the cross are closely related in 1 Cor 1-4. The first thing we hear is of a wisdom which is in a negative way related to the cross. When in 1:17b the reason is given why preaching the gospel should not take place ἐν σοφίᾳ λόγου the motivation is: ἵνα μὴ κενωθῇ ὁ σταυρὸς τοῦ Χριστοῦ. It is said that preaching by means of wisdom language has a detrimental effect on 'the cross of Christ'.³⁴

What is meant with this emptying of the cross? The phrase οὐκ ἐν σοφίᾳ λόγου means not only a refusal of a certain kind of speech but at least as much of a certain kind of content.³⁵ The result of preaching in σοφίᾳ λόγου would not only be a loss of power but also a loss of content. The cross would lose its effect and its meaning.³⁶ According to Schmithals the particular content of this wisdom was Gnostic and entailed a rejection of the bodily existence of Christ, which obviously implies a denial of the crucifixion.³⁷ But the Corinthian church did not need to be Gnostic or docetic to declare the cross irrelevant. The statement ἵνα μὴ κενωθῇ ὁ σταυρὸς τοῦ Χριστοῦ would also have been appropriate when the Corinthians considered faith in the historical cross of Christ a lower level faith that had to be transcended.³⁸ A Hellenistic-Jewish outlook tended to reduce the significance of particular historical events. Paul, however, insists that the cross never lacks relevance and that Christ, even in his exalted state, is still the crucified one.

While divisions and wisdom were burning issues for at least a part of the Corinthian church, it is likely that Paul himself introduces the theme of the cross. L. Welborn interpreted this turn to the cross as an instrumental one. In his view Paul enlists the cross in an essentially political battle against divisions and transfers the conflict of factions ideologically to a theological level.³⁹ But according to the text itself, the turn to the cross is not a move away from Corinthian reality, but a return to the community's reason of existence, its very basis: the crucified Christ (3:10).

In 1:17 the text moves from DIVISIONS (1:10-16) to WISDOM and THE CROSS.⁴⁰ It remains speculative to try to determine the "subterranean connection"⁴¹ between these

³⁴ This expression 'cross of Christ' is a variation on 'Christ crucified' (1:23; 2:2).

³⁵ See Chapter 3, note on 1 Cor 1:17.

³⁶ The NIV translation "lest the cross of Christ be emptied *of its power*" puts the emphasis on effect above content. Wendland 16 rightly connects this power with salvation: "dass es seiner Heilswirkung beraubt wird".

³⁷ W. Schmithals, *Die Gnosis in Korinth* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1956) 56-8.

³⁸ Cf. H. Weder's emphasis: the historicity of the cross-event was threatened by the form of wisdom prevalent in Corinth: *Das Kreuz Jesu bei Paulus. Ein Versuch über den Geschichtsbezug des christlichen Glaubens nachzudenken* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1981).

³⁹ "The unwelcome drives that found expression in the strife of the parties could not be abolished, so they were transfigured" (Welborn, "Discord," 110).

⁴⁰ To H. Schlier, "Kerugma and Sophia," in *Die Zeit der Kirche* (Freiburg: Herder, 1956): 206-7 the turn seemed almost casual and he explained it as a thought that occurred to Paul: "Bei dem Stichwort 'das Evangelium zu verkündigen' fällt dem Apostel sozusagen ein, dass die schwierige Situation in der korinthischen Kirche eigentlich unter einem anderen Gesichtspunkt gesehen werden muss und dass man sie nur von innen her beheben kann." However, 1 Cor 1:18-31 is a carefully reasoned argument, which must have had some preparation beforehand.

⁴¹ Wendland 16: "eine unterirdische Zusammenhang".

themes. Whether in the mind of Paul DIVISIONS is ultimately caused by a discarding of THE CROSS is not stated. We cannot even be sure that THE CROSS is presented as the answer to DIVISIONS, even though the development of the text suggests it and many authors consider this to be the case.⁴² The text only shows in 1:17 an adverse relation between a WISDOM qualified by λόγος and THE CROSS. Because in 1:17 λόγος and σταυρός do not agree with each other, their combination in 1:18 seems slightly ironic. The depreciation of λόγος in σοφία λόγου returns in 2:1, 4, 13 and 4:19, 20 but is rare elsewhere in Paul's letters.⁴³ After the refusal of σοφία λόγου the gospel is presented as a λόγος but then a very different λόγος.⁴⁴ The expression λόγος τοῦ σταυροῦ does not occur elsewhere in Paul.⁴⁵

What is the meaning of λόγος in 1:18? A rhetorical λόγος in the sense of discourse or oration⁴⁶ seems ill suited to convey the harsh reality of the cross of Christ.⁴⁷ The public despised the cross as a method of punishment and considered it an unsuitable subject for discourse. As M. Hengel puts it in his monograph: "For Paul and his contemporaries the cross of Jesus was not a didactic, symbolic or speculative element but a very specific and highly offensive matter which imposed a burden on the earliest Christian missionary preaching."⁴⁸ For Jewish ears the inglorious death of the Messiah could be nothing else but a repulsive proclamation, "especially when they could hardly forget the saying about the curse laid upon anyone hanged on a tree (Deut 21:23)."⁴⁹ Even so, 'word of the cross' is the expression which summarizes the apostolic message in 1 Cor 1-4 and many scholars agree about the central position of the word of the cross in

⁴² E.g. M. Konradt, "Die korinthische Weisheit und das Wort vom Kreuz," *ZNW* 2003: 213; Wolff 25; Voss, *Wort vom Kreuz*, 55; cf. Koch, *Zeuge*, 273: "Paulus antwortet in diesen ersten grossen Abschnitt des 1 Kor auf das in Korinth aufgebrochene Problem von Spaltung und Einheit der Gemeinde mit einer grundsätzlichen Rückbesinnung und Klärung der Grundlage, auf der die Gemeinde als Ganze beruht, dem pointiert als λόγος τοῦ σταυροῦ (1:18) bezeichneten Evangelium."

⁴³ We only encounter οὐκ ἐν λόγῳ μόνον in 1 Thess 1:5; cf. also Eph 4:29 and 5:6.

⁴⁴ This manoeuvre foreshadows the positive presentation of σοφία in 2:6.

⁴⁵ Lindemann 43: an *ad hoc* formulation and not a *terminus technicus* for Paul.

⁴⁶ Out of all the different meanings λόγος may have in its Hellenistic environment, 'continuous statement, narrative, oration' seems to come closest to the intention in 1:18: LSJ, s.v. V; cf. V.4: 'speech, delivered at court, assembly, etc.'; in the New Testament we may compare λόγος τοῦ σταυροῦ with λόγος τῆς καταλλαγῆς (2 Cor 5:19), λόγος τῆς σωτηρίας (Ac 13:26), and λόγος τῆς βασιλείας (Mt 13:19). Paul may refer to the same initial preaching as to the Galatians in Gal 3:1 (Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς προεγράφη ἐσταυρωμένος). According to J.L. Martyn we are to think of a narrative of "the essentially punctiliar events of Jesus' betrayal (cf. 1 Cor 11:23-26), condemnation, crucifixion, and resurrection." *Galatians* (New York: Doubleday, 1997) 283.

⁴⁷ In 1 Cor 1-4 the gospel is also called μαρτύριον τοῦ Χριστοῦ (1:6, cf. variant in 2:1; rare elsewhere in the Pauline letters) and κηρύγμα (1 Cor 1:21, 2:4; also 15:14 and Rom 16:25). In 2:4 λόγος is used again but then qualified as ὁ λόγος μου in a *hendiadys* with τὸ κηρύγμα μου.

⁴⁸ M. Hengel, *Crucifixion* (London: SCM, 1977) 18.

⁴⁹ Hengel, *Crucifixion*, 10.

the preaching and letters of Paul.⁵⁰ With emphasis the gospel is called ὁ λόγος ὁ τοῦ σταυροῦ in 1:18.⁵¹ As the argument continues we hear in 1:23 that the content of the apostolic preaching is Χριστός ἐσταυρωμένος and this expression recurs emphatically in 2:2. In sum, in 1 Cor 1–4 the gospel is defined in terms of the cross.

In our text this λόγος is associated with κηρύγμα, ‘message,’ explicitly so in 2:3. We may compare Paul’s λόγος with the message of the prophets. In the prophetic books of the LXX the Hebrew דְּבַר is usually expressed as λόγος. While in the prophetic books (incl. Dan) of the LXX ῥημα stands 40 times in the position of דְּבַר, λόγος occurs 320 times as the equivalent of דְּבַר.⁵² Paul seems to share some important features with the prophets regarding the ‘word.’ While the Greek λόγος is primarily conceptual, a means to convey knowledge, the Hebrew דְּבַר and then also λόγος in the LXX is an entity which possesses force.⁵³ The ‘word’ makes alive (Ψ 118:154) and runs swiftly (Ψ 147:4, cf. 2 Thess 3:1). If this background plays a role, the dynamic quality of λόγος in the LXX may contribute to our understanding of 1:18, where it says Ὁ λόγος γὰρ ὁ τοῦ σταυροῦ ... δύναμις θεοῦ ἐστίν (cf. Rom 1:16 the gospel as δύναμις θεοῦ εἰς σωτηρίαν). For Paul δύναμις and πνεῦμα are closely related (cf. 1 Cor 2:4–5). He can say in 1 Thess 1:5: “Our gospel came (ἐγενήθη) to you not in speech only but also in power and in the Holy Spirit.”⁵⁴ The term ἐγενήθη in 1 Thess 1:5 suggests another point of correspondence because the expression ‘the word of the Lord *came to* ... (דְּבַר, LXX ἐγένετο) is a standard formula in the prophets.⁵⁵ On the basis of ἐγενόμην in 1 Cor 2:3 we

⁵⁰ Cf. Conzelmann 59, Eng. 41, concerning 1:18: “the word of the cross’ is, as is shown by 2:1f., an exhaustive statement of the content of the gospel.” According to G. Bornkamm, *Paulus* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1969) 166, ‘the word of the cross’ summarizes the content of the whole letter. For P. Stuhlmacher Paul’s proclamation of the cross is the critical centre of the whole of his theology: “Achtzehn Thesen zur paulinischen Kreuzestheologie,” in *Versöhnung, Gesetz und Gerechtigkeit* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1981) 192–208. The first thesis in this essay states: “Bei der Verkündigung des Kreuzes geht es um das Ganze der paulinischen Theologie, und zwar in gesetzes- und weisheitskritischer Zuspitzung.” (194). G. Eichholz, “Paulus im Umgang mit jungen Kirchen. Exegetische Beobachtungen zu 1 Kor. 1,18–25,” in *Tradition und Interpretation* (München: Kaiser, 1965) 103: calls it “die Mitte seiner Verkündigung”; Cf. also J. Zumstein, “Das Wort vom Kreuz als Mitte der paulinischen Theologie,” in *Kreuzestheologie im Neuen Testament* (ed. A. Dettwiler and J. Zumstein; Tübingen: Mohr, 2002) 27–41.

⁵¹ The repetition of the article before the genitive serves primarily for emphasis and secondarily for clarification (cf. Wallace 214).

⁵² O. Procksch, “λέγω κτλ,” *TWNT* 4:91.

⁵³ Cf. Collins 101: “Describing the word of God as a powerful and effective word is a biblical motif (see, for example, Isa 55:10–11).” Likewise W. Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 1–24* (Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 1969) 89, and O. Procksch, “λέγω κτλ,” 90–1: “Jeder דְּבַר ist mit Kraft gefüllt. ... Diese Kraft wird empfunden von dem, der das Wort vernimmt und in sich aufnimmt; sie gilt aber auch unabhängig von dieser Aufnahme in den objektiven Wirkungen, die das Wort in der Geschichte hat.”

⁵⁴ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον ἡμῶν οὐκ ἐγενήθη εἰς ὑμᾶς ἐν λόγῳ μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐν δυνάμει καὶ ἐν πνεύματι ἀγίῳ καὶ [ἐν] πληροφορίᾳ πολλῇ.

⁵⁵ Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 89 indicates 113 occurrences in MT, of which 50 in the book of Ezekiel (in LXX sometimes additionally e.g. Isa 2:1, Jer 1:1).

should supply ἐγένετο in 2:4 as verb to go with 'my word and my preaching'.⁵⁶ In these two successive verses we find the same close association of apostle and word as in 1 Thess 1 and 2; the arrival of the one implies the arrival of the other. The apostolic λόγος seems to have the same event-quality as the prophetic word. Finally, the word of the prophets always has a definite article (*the* word of the Lord) and this feature also characterizes in our text τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, ὁ λόγος, and τὸ κηρύγμα. The prophet speaks *the* word of the Lord even though it is directed to different audiences at different occasions.⁵⁷

The sentence which introduces the word of the cross (1:18) is, in agreement with the rhetorical analysis in the previous chapter, the thesis or *propositio* of 1 Cor 1:10–4:21.⁵⁸

"For the word of the cross

is foolishness to those who are being lost

but is the power of God to us who are being saved".

This *propositio* is a surprising statement for which the reader only has been prepared by the ending of the *narratio* (in 17b). A *propositio* has a programmatic value for the *argumentatio*. This means that at least the section 1:18–2:16 is determined by the word of the cross. This agrees with what a growing number of exegetes has concluded: that 2:6–16 does not offer wisdom beyond the message of a crucified Christ, but forms a continuation of 1:18–2:5.⁵⁹

When we see the whole section 1:18–2:16 as an unfolding of the word of the cross, the different approaches to wisdom presented in 1:18–2:5 and 2:6–16 may be found programmatically expressed in 1:18. After all, a *propositio* may offer a *partitio*, a preview of the matters to be dealt with in sequence.⁶⁰ If this *partitio*-aspect is present, we may discern the outworking of 1:18a in 1:19–2:5 and that of 1:18b in 2:6–16. Just like 1:18–2:5 does, the passage 2:6–16 presents the word of the cross, but now in a different light, in the light of the 'us,' mentioned in 1:18b and again in 2:10 (ἡμῖν) and in 2:12, 16 (ἡμεῖς). The two different responses to 'the word of the cross' in 1:18a and 18b find elaboration in

⁵⁶ Bachmann 114–5, Weiss 49.

⁵⁷ Thus G. van Rad, *Old Testament Theology. Volume 2* (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1965) 88: "At different times and to different people the prophet takes different ways of saying the same thing. Paradoxical as it may seem, in principle the prophet says the same thing to everyone; he plays variations upon it only to meet differences in the conditions of his audience."

⁵⁸ On the list of Strüder, *Gesinnung*, 73, only Schrage appears in support of 1:18 as *propositio*. However, other exegetes who are not led by strictly rhetorical considerations consider 1:18 as thesis, e.g. Conzelmann 41; Wilckens, *Weisheit*, 21; Baumann, *Mitte*, 89; F. Voss, *Das Wort vom Kreuz und die menschliche Vernunft* (Göttingen 2002) 61.

⁵⁹ Wilckens, in "Zu 1 Kor 2,1–16", 513 revises his earlier position and states that 2:6–16 is nothing else but a further interpretation of the λόγος τοῦ σταυροῦ. Likewise Voss, *Wort*, 190–1; H.-C. Kammler, *Kreuz und Weisheit* (Tübingen: Mohr, 2003) 186–92, of which G. Sellin says in *TLZ* 130 (2005) 650: "Eine der zentralen Thesen des Buches besteht in der überzeugend nachgewiesenen Behauptung, dass es (trotz gegenteiligen Anscheins) für Paulus neben der Kreuzespredigt nicht auch noch eine Weisheitsverkündigung gebe, die etwa für die Fortgeschrittenen und die Eingeweihten nützlich sei. Wo Paulus positiv von 'Weisheit' redet, ist es Gottes Weisheit, die gerade in der Predigt vom gekreuzigten Christus besteht."

⁶⁰ Lausberg I 188–90.

broad outline in 1:18–2:5 and 2:6–16. The emphasis in 1:18–2:5 is on the 'foolish' character of the message and in 2:6–16 on its 'power of God' character. Even though the term δύναμις (θεοῦ) of 18b does not occur in 2:6–16, the idea of effective power remains present in the form of πνεῦμα (θεοῦ). The term δύναμις reappears in 1 Cor 4:19, 20 in a contrast with an empty λόγος. Thus at the end of the *argumentatio* the text resumes the refusal of σοφία λόγου in 1:17, now embodied and exposed in the speech of 'puffed up' local leaders (4:19).

4. Boasting

BOASTING is not as prominent in the text as the aforementioned themes but it is important enough to receive separate attention. The term occurs at high points within the argument of 1 Cor 1–4: in the minor climax (1:29, 31), in the major climax (3:21), and in the final *peroratio*, as expressed in the verb φυσιόω (4:18, 19, cf. 4:6, 7). In 1:26–31 boasting is redirected, away from human privileges, abilities, and achievements, to 'the Lord'. The relationship between boasting and wisdom is made clear in 2:1 καθ' ὑπεροχὴν λόγου ἢ σοφίας. There must have been people in the church of Corinth who acted as if they were superior in speech or wisdom and who considered it legitimate to boast.

In our previous discussion, we concluded that the subject of the cross is Paul's own contribution but that the themes of strife and wisdom were provided by the Corinthians. Though the use of 'boasting' in 1 Cor 1–4 is Paul's own interpretation, the interest in 'boasting' was probably present in Corinth. Boasting is part of the large field of social evaluation and competition that characterizes the ancient Mediterranean 'honor society.'⁶¹ Boasting was acceptable in defence of one's name or to encourage others to follow laudable behaviour. It was not approved when motivated by ambition or self-glorification.⁶² Though the practice of boasting was certainly not absent from Greco-Roman society, "the term καυχᾶσθαι is not common in Greek literature or throughout the New Testament, where it is confined to Paul."⁶³ For Paul boasting is an important concept, because it denotes a basic attitude (*Grundhaltung*).⁶⁴ Paul does not allow any boasting in one's own position or gifts, because all these things have been received (4:7). Neither does he allow any boasting in leaders, since these also have been given to the community (3:21–22). The only proper boasting is 'in the Lord' (1:31). The object of a person's boasting reveals his or her final allegiance or trust.

⁶¹ Boasting is a response to ascriptions of honor, "which center on the honor one has by virtue of one's birth into a particular family or race and on the honor bestowed on one by a greater person through, for example, adoption into a noble family or appointment to a prominent office" (D.A. deSilva, *The Hope of Glory. Honor Discourse and New Testament Interpretation* [Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1999] 9, cf. 118–43 on "Honor Discourse in the Corinthian Correspondence").

⁶² D.F. Watson, "Paul and Boasting," in *Paul in the Greco-Roman world* (ed. J.P. Sampley; Harrisburg: Trinity Press, 2003) 555.

⁶³ Mitchell, *Paul*, 91.

⁶⁴ R. Bultmann, "καυχᾶσθαι κτλ.," *TWNT* 3: 646–53 and Idem, *Theologie des Neuen Testaments* (9th ed.; Tübingen: Mohr, 1984) 242–3.

It is worth to observe that the theme of boasting enters into the argument when a section comes to a conclusion (1:29–31 and 3:21–23). This may have to do with the fact that ‘boasting in the Lord’ is related to doxological speech and there is a general tendency to move towards doxology at the end of sections in Paul’s letters.⁶⁵ Yet this end-position of boasting in chapters 1 and 3 may also reveal something of Paul’s underlying thought. It may indicate a particular authorial logic in 1 Cor 1–4. This logic can be discerned in the movement of the argument: Party strife (1:10–17, cf. 3:1–17) is engendered by false wisdom (1:18–28 and 3:18–20), while false wisdom originates in the *Grundhaltung* of boasting (1:29 and 3:21). Paul digs deeper to lay bare the root problem in Corinth. According to this scenario, boasting in men is the wrong starting point that needs to be replaced by boasting in the Lord. That will change the face of wisdom and put an end to strife.

5. The Spirit

Within 1 Cor 1–4 there is a high concentration of πνεῦμα-terms in 2:10–16. In this short section we encounter πνεῦμα 8 times, πνευματικός 3 times, and πνευματικῶς once. Before this section πνεῦμα occurs only once, in 2:4, where the word is linked with δύναμις.⁶⁶ After 2:10–16 πνευματικός reappears once in 3:1 and πνεῦμα returns only in 3:16.⁶⁷ Accordingly, the concentration of πνεῦμα-terms in 2:10–16 shows that in this short section the Spirit is important. It begins with διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος in 2:10a indicating the way in which the revelation of the wisdom of God takes place.

The Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God (2:10), and is therefore the revealer *par excellence*. He even has the monopoly in revelation as the following verses clarify. Verse 11 presents a parallel: just like only a person’s own spirit has access to his thoughts, τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ οὐδεὶς ἔγνωκεν εἰ μὴ τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ θεοῦ.⁶⁸ The text does not claim affinity between the human and the divine spirit but argues *a minore ad maius*, an argument understood by Greek and Jew alike.⁶⁹ It does not go beyond stating an analogy between the divine and the human spirit.⁷⁰ In fact, 2:11 has the opposite effect of joining God’s thoughts and man’s thoughts; the two are set apart. The things of God are unknown to man and only known to God’s own Spirit, so that man’s knowledge of the things of God depends on the Spirit’s revealing action. This revelation has taken place

⁶⁵ E.g. Gal 1:5; Rom 11:33–36, 16:25–27; Phil 4:20; sometimes even within an argument, Rom 9:5.

⁶⁶ Δύναμις has a certain overlap in meaning with πνεῦμα. In the flow of the argument πνεῦμα trades places with δύναμις in 2:4–5 after δύναμις occurs in 1:18,24; 2:4,5, and then reappears in 4:19,20.

⁶⁷ In 4:21 πνεῦμα refers to the human spirit (see ch.3, n. 126).

⁶⁸ Thiselton 257–8 clarifies: “the point of analogy does not turn on human spirit within / divine spirit within, but on the possession of an exclusive initiative to reveal one’s thoughts ...”

⁶⁹ Collins 133: resp. quasi-syllogistic and *qal wahomer*.

⁷⁰ Merklein 236.

(2:10a), “we have received the Spirit from God that we might know the things of God that have been granted to us” (2:12).

Some have interpreted 2:10–11 as referring to divine self-revelation.⁷¹ However, the context consistently refers to a revelation of the things that God has granted to us (τὰ ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ χαρισθέντα ἡμῖν, 2:12). Likewise, the implied object of 2:10 is found in 2:9, “the things God has prepared” (ἃ ἡτοίμασεν ὁ θεός). The plural expresses the fulness of *Heilsgüter*, of which 1:30b mentions the most important aspects.⁷²

After 2:10–12 dealt with the role of the Spirit in revelation, 2:13–16 deals with the role the Spirit plays in understanding. Especially noteworthy is the opposition between ψυχικός (ἄνθρωπος) and πνευματικός in these verses. An anthropological dualism of body and soul was common in ancient religion but this opposition is very unusual. It is foreign to Greek tradition⁷³ and does not occur in Philo.⁷⁴ A negative view of ψυχικός is only found in more radical Gnostic texts, where not only bodily but also psychic existence ties man down to this world.⁷⁵ Several commentators conclude, therefore, that Paul must have drawn his phrasing from a Gnostic environment.⁷⁶ However, these texts are of later origin, which makes a Gnostic source very unlikely.⁷⁷ The only other negative uses of ψυχικός are found in the New Testament: in Jas 3:15 and Jude 19. Still it is important to note that, even though ψυχικός in 1 Cor 2:14 sharply distinguishes man on the human and earthly level from man gifted with the Spirit of God, ψυχικός ἄνθρωπος has no negative connotation in itself.⁷⁸ The negative evaluation concerns only this person’s lack of ‘the things of the Spirit.’ The same is true for γραμματεὺς and συζητητής in 1:20, terms that have no disparaging ring.⁷⁹ In the field of human understanding they present the best that is available, yet even these highly qualified men are unable to attain to the wisdom of God.

⁷¹ E.g. G. Theissen, “Weisheit für Vollkommene als höheres Bewusstsein (1.Kor 2,6–16),” in Idem, *Psychologische Aspekte paulinischer Theologie* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1983) 363: “Gott offenbart nicht etwas, sondern sich selbst – sowie der Geist eines Menschen von sich selbst her einem anderen öffnet (v.11).” Cf. Chapter 6.2 Revelation.

⁷² Wolff 60; pace Weiss 64: the gifts mentioned in 1:30b and 2:12b are not just future gifts, as δόξα ἡμῶν is in 2:7.

⁷³ Lindemann 71; Schrage 263: Greek thought never saw ψυχή in opposition to πνεῦμα; ψυχή has a larger share in the divine than anything else in man and it is the human ψυχή that is dubbed immortal. Only in the Hellenistic-Roman period a slight devaluation of ψυχή took place, though not in relation to πνεῦμα but towards νοῦς (A. Dihle, “ψυχή κτλ,” *TWNT* 9: 612).

⁷⁴ Schrage 263–4; cf. Dihle, “ψυχή κτλ,” 632–3.

⁷⁵ Schrage 263, with references.

⁷⁶ Conzelmann 93–4; Theissen, “Aspekte,” 357–61; Schrage 263; Lindemann 72.

⁷⁷ Admitted by Schrage 263, n.249; Lindemann 72 opts for derivation from the *Umwelt* of early Gnosis. Theissen, “Aspekte,” 359: “Es bleibt dabei: Der Gegensatz von πνευματικός und ψυχικός lässt sich bislang nicht aus vorpaulinischen Quellen ableiten.” See also R. Morissette, “L’Antithèse entre le ‘psychique’ et le ‘pneumatique’ en 1 Corinthiens XV, 44 à 46,” *RScRel* 46 (1972) 103–5.

⁷⁸ Schweizer, “ψυχικός κτλ,” *TWNT* 9: 664, n.13.

⁷⁹ M. Lautenschlager, “Abschied vom Diputierer. Zur Bedeutung von συζητητής in 1 Kor 1,20,” *ZNW* 83 (1992) 276–85, 285.

Because attempts at deriving the opposition between ψυχικός (ἄνθρωπος) and πνευματικός from a Greek or Hellenistic-Jewish source have been unsuccessful, Paul must have arrived at these terms with the help of other means. According to Fee ψυχικός most likely finds its origin in Paul's Jewish background, where ψυχή as LXX translation of נֶפֶשׁ often denotes "humanity in its natural, physical existence."⁸⁰ As in 1 Cor 15:44-46 he may be inspired by certain texts or thought patterns of Scripture.⁸¹

6. Building

Unlike other themes, which recur within 1 Cor 1-4, BUILDING only occurs in the section 3:1-17. Most commentators call this a section on leadership, which is especially appropriate for 3:4-9. In 3:6-9 the task of a leader is compared with that of a farmer who cares for his crops. The largest part (3:9-17), however, is devoted to the building metaphor and the ample use made of this metaphor encourages us to adopt it as a theme within 1 Cor 1-4. While leadership is the implied theme in this section, building is the explicit theme. The theme of BUILDING has implications and intertextual relationships which might be lost when leadership is taken as umbrella-theme. At first sight 'building'⁸² seems a topic not quite at home in 1Cor 1-4. It does not appear to be a necessary part of the *argumentatio* that deals with wisdom and the word of the cross against a background of divisions. This prompts us to look for a reason or reasons for the inclusion of this topic in our text:

1) Building is a positive metaphor and is well suited to encourage the Corinthians. Throughout 1 Cor 1-4 church leadership is shown to be a source of discord in Corinth (1:12; 3:3, 22; 4:6). In dealing with this discord there is a strong denunciation of those who by their actions, attitudes, and language in effect destroy the church (3:17)⁸³. Against this abuse of leadership Paul now stresses that the most important function of church leadership is to build and that the manner in which one builds matters a great deal. The exhortation on reliable building in 3:10-17 fits in the larger argument of 2:6-3:23 which offers a positive approach to wisdom, after 1:18-2:5 had been fundamentally critical of the wisdom of the world. The refusal to take human wisdom as starting point is not meant to

⁸⁰ Fee 116; Witherington 128; Strobel 72: "Der Sprachgebrauch des Paulus unterscheidet sich streng von dem der griechischen Philosophie und ebenso von dem der Gnosis, weil grundsätzlich die 'seelische' Art des Menschen im Sinne der jüdischen Anthropologie benannt und bewertet ist."

⁸¹ Cf. Morissette, "L'antithèse," 105 on the opposition between ψυχικός and πνευματικός in 1 Cor 15:44-46: "Rien ne prouve par conséquent que Paul s'inspire d'un texte autre que Gen. 2,7." Schlatter 121: "Der Sprachgebrauch ist schon hier wie 15:45 durch Gen 2:7 bestimmt."

⁸² In this passage οἰκοδομή – conform its Greek meaning – means not so much the finished building but the building under construction (Wolff 69).

⁸³ Εἴ τις τὸν ναὸν τοῦ θεοῦ φθείρει, φθερεῖ τοῦτον ὁ θεός; according to E. Käsemann an example of *Jus talionis* located on an eschatological level, as the future in the *apodosis* indicates ("Sätze heiligen Rechtes im Neuen Testament," in *Exegetische Versuche und Besinnungen II* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1968) 69-70.

leave a vacuum and the text continues with a focus on Spirit-given wisdom instead (2:10–16). The role of leaders like Apollos and Paul (3:5–9) is to teach this true wisdom. As servants of the community (3:5, 22) and of Christ (4:1), they are to provide for a healthy development of the church. They must give the Corinthians good food (3:2) to strengthen their faith and to teach them to live in conformity with the gospel. The segment 3:5–17 dwells at some length on what leadership positively entails.

2) It has been argued that the metaphor of a building is introduced as a literary *topos* to urge political or social unity on divided groups.⁸⁴ This purely instrumental interpretation of the metaphor is not very plausible because building is hardly a political concept but occurs in a wide variety of literature: from Gnosticism⁸⁵ to rabbinic Judaism.⁸⁶ Rabbinical scholars were called ‘master-builders.’⁸⁷ Furthermore, the language of building is frequent in Scripture.⁸⁸ Reference is often made to the prophet Jeremiah (e.g. Jer 1:10) but we may also think of the work of building attributed to personified Wisdom in Proverbs 9:1 and the rebuilding of Jerusalem in Deutero-Isaiah.

3) Building projects and crop growing (3:6–9) represent the most common activities in urban and rural life. Any first century traveller was familiar with these sights. It is probably not farfetched to suppose that on Paul’s travels comparisons between church matters and building projects came to his mind.⁸⁹ Moreover, dwellers in a city like Corinth, with much construction activity going on after its founding as a Roman *colonia* in 44 BC, would immediately recognize the significance of the building metaphor. The other side of the picture (3:16–17) presented itself to the eyes and ears as well: “The cities of the ancient world were filled with the noise of buildings collapsing or being demolished for fear of collapse.”⁹⁰

⁸⁴ Mitchell, *Paul*, 99–100.

⁸⁵ H. Schlier, *Christus und die Kirche im Epheserbrief* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1930) 49–60: The Pastor of Hermas pictures the Son of God as the door of the building representing the Body, the Church, while like other New Testament passages, 1 Cor 3:10 makes of Christ the foundation stone.

⁸⁶ *TWNT* 5:139: the image was probably encouraged by the popular concept of ‘the house of Israel’

⁸⁷ H.L. Strack and P. Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud and Midrasch 1* (München: Beck, 1926) 876.

⁸⁸ R. Bach, “Bauen und Pflanzen,” in *Studien zur Theologie der alttestamentlichen Überlieferungen* (ed. R. Rendtorff and K. Koch; Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 1961) 7–32.

⁸⁹ Conzelmann 101, Eng. 75, n.60 refers to Deut 20:5,6 and remarks: “In the living conditions of that day, house building and planting were the two constitutive labours”. J. Shanor points more specifically to the construction of temples: “The similarity of structure and vocabulary does suggest that temple construction provided the apostle with material for metaphor.” (“Paul as Master Builder: Construction Terms in First Corinthians,” in *NTS* 34 (1988) 461–71, 471.

⁹⁰ D.J. Williams, *Paul’s Metaphors* (Peabody: Hendrickson 1999) 19.

7. Apostleship

That Paul's apostleship is involved in 1 Cor 1-4 has been observed by many exegetes. Some have even taken this as the major theme and interpreted 1 Cor 1-4 as a section of apostolic defence like 2 Cor 10-13. This would go too far, but the theme is present throughout. In the letters of Paul in general APOSTLESHIP receives a fair share of attention.⁹¹ His apostolic calling is always implied and remained essential in all his dealings with the churches. The following relationships characterize this apostleship.

An apostle does not come on his initiative; he is sent. This is very central to Paul's self-understanding.⁹² In 1 Cor 1:1 Paul amplifies Παῦλος ἀπόστολος with κλητὸς, with Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ, and with διὰ θελήματος θεοῦ. In 1:17 he says that Christ sent him (ἀπέστειλεν με Χριστός).

The apostle also stands in a specific relationship to his message. The purpose of his sending is 'to preach the gospel' (1:17). In Romans 1:1 Paul describes himself as 'set apart for the gospel' and his apostleship consists primarily in bringing the gospel. It could even be said that the gospel establishes the apostleship and not the other way around. This is especially clear in the letter to the Galatians.⁹³ The gospel that has been preached is the criterion and not the apostle who preached it (cf. Gal.1:8). Apostleship is not an end in itself.⁹⁴ "It is not ourselves that we proclaim; we proclaim Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your servants, for Jesus' sake" (2 Cor 4:4 NEB).

The apostle is also related to the churches. In order to correct the Corinthians' view of apostleship, Paul says: "What then is Apollos and what is Paul? *Servants* (δῆκονοι) through whom you have come to believe" (1 Cor 3:5). In 3:22 he includes Paul, Apollos and Cephas among all things that have been given to them. A major motif in Paul's correspondence with the Corinthians remains that a servant does not serve himself but the church (2 Cor 1:24; 4:5; 6:4; 11:23).⁹⁵ Leadership is meant to serve the community and not to take advantage of it (2 Cor 11:20). The relationship of the apostle to the Corinthians differs from that to e.g. the Romans, "for in Christ Jesus⁹⁶ I became your father (ὁμᾶς ἐγέννησα) through the gospel" (1 Cor 4:15, cf. Phlm 10).⁹⁷ The

⁹¹ G. Bornkamm, *Paulus* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1969) 172.

⁹² While in the letters to the Thessalonians, the Philippians and Philemon an affirmation of apostleship does not appear in the letter opening, in other letters his apostleship is emphasized, apparently required by the situation. This is especially the case in Galatians and 1 Corinthians.

⁹³ J. Blank, *Vom Urchristentum zur Kirche* (München: Kösel, 1982) 197.

⁹⁴ Blank, *Urchristentum*, 180.

⁹⁵ Schlatter 129.

⁹⁶ W. Schrage, "Das apostolische Amt des Paulus nach 1 Kor 4,14-17" in *L'Apôtre Paul* (ed. A. Vanhoye; Leuven: Peeters, 1986) 107: "es gibt kein Verhältnis Apostel/Kirche remoto Christo."

⁹⁷ According to P. Gutierrez, *La Paternité spirituelle selon Saint Paul* (Paris: Gabalda, 1968) 156 the metaphor ἐγέννησα implies that Paul himself became an instrument, a means of grace through which God gave salvation. This interpretation, however, reads too much in the expression. Fatherhood is not meant in a sacramental or mystical sense (cf. Lindemann 114, citing in contrast Apuleius *Met* XI 25,7). The Corinthians have received their new life by means of (διὰ) the gospel and the emphasis is on 'in Christ Jesus' placed at the beginning of the sentence.

exhortation μιμηταί μου γίνεσθε (4:16) does not call for an isolated *imitatio Pauli*, because this would contradict his rejection of aligning oneself with particular leaders (cf. “Who is Paul?” 3:5). Instead, the καθὼς καὶ γὰρ Χριστοῦ of 1 Cor 11:1 is implied. The exhortation shows that a μιμήσις Χριστοῦ requires examples like the apostle.⁹⁸ The ὁδοί μου ἐν Χριστῷ (4:17) which had been taught by Paul in Corinth, will entail *kerugma* as well as *paraenesis*, because these belong together, as becomes evident throughout 1 Cor 1–4 and elsewhere in his letters. The word of the cross calls for a life that is always in touch with the cross, until the final arrival of the Kingdom (cf. 4:8).

Finally, Paul’s apostleship is a work he shares with fellow-workers. Paul recommends his co-workers and attributes a large role to them, as our letter shows in 1:1, 14–15; 4:17; 16:10–13, 15–20). The first person plural passages in 1 Cor 1–4 should be understood as giving expression to the exclusive *we*⁹⁹, that is: the apostle and his associates (1 Cor 1:18–25; 2:6–7; 3:9; 4:1,¹⁰⁰ 6–13). The first person plural in 2:10–15, however, is best understood as an inclusive *we*.¹⁰¹ Not only had the apostolic community received pneumatic understanding, but all who are referred to as ‘those who love Him’ in 2:9, and who have already been mentioned (ἡμῖν) in 1:18b. As a contrast with the rulers of 2:8 who did not understand, 2:10 starts with ‘but to us,’ viz. ‘all Christians’.¹⁰² The scope is inclusive even though there is a rhetorical undercurrent in the text that challenges the readers to make sure they are πνευματικοί and not mere ψυχικοί.¹⁰³ The first person plural in 4:1–13 refers to Paul and other apostles,¹⁰⁴ while in 4:6 ἐν ἡμῖν pertains to Apollos and Paul. The expression ‘us apostles’ in 4:9 refers to ‘the apostolic community’, that is “those who in the end time have been commissioned to proclaim the saving act of God in Jesus Christ and have been thereby called to live the peculiar life of the apostolic community ... Its task is to pass on the message, and that means to pass on the life-pattern implied in the proclamation of the message.”¹⁰⁵

The context 4:14–17 also indicates: From me you first heard and received the gospel (4:15), so now follow my example (4:16), accept as beloved children (4:14), like Timothy (4:17), my directives (4:14), teachings (4:17), and if need be, correction (4:21).

⁹⁸ Cf. Schrage, “Das apostolische Amt,” 111–2.

⁹⁹ Wallace 397, explains the distinction as follows: in the exclusive *we* “the first person plural restricts the group to the author and his associates (whether co-authors, those physically present, even those who, distinct from the audience, have participated in some of the author’s experiences, etc.” The inclusive *we* includes “both author(s) and audience”.

¹⁰⁰ This verse apparently alludes to Paul, Peter, and Apollos in 3:22

¹⁰¹ Pace M. Bockmuehl, *Revelation and Mystery in Ancient Judaism and Pauline Christianity* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1990) 164: “apostles and prophets”. Thiselton 255 and Schrage 256–7 leave the option between inclusive and exclusive *we* open, but reject the reference to an esoteric or privileged group within the church (as Conzelmann 79 thinks).

¹⁰² Weiss 60; Robertson-Plummer 43,45; Merklein 234; Wolff 58; Lindemann 67; Schnabel 171; Baumann, *Mitte*, 229–30.

¹⁰³ Cf. Fee 101, n.13; Baumann, *Mitte*, 205–6.

¹⁰⁴ Wolff 79, Thiselton 337.

¹⁰⁵ Hanson, *Paradox of the Cross*, 31–2.

8. Overview

A combination of the rhetorical dispositio of Chapter 5 and the themes discussed in Chapter 6 results in the following overview:

		DIVISIONS	WISDOM	THE WORD OF THE CROSS	BOASTING	THE SPIRIT	BUILDING	APOSTLESHIP
<i>narratio</i>	1:10-17	X						X
<i>argumentatio</i>	1:18-25		X	X				
	1:26-31		X		X			
	2:1-5		X	X		X		
	2:6-16		X	X		X		
	3:1-17	X	X			X	X	X
<i>peroratio</i>	3:18-23		X		X			X
<i>refutatio</i>	4:1-13		X		X			X
<i>peroratio</i>	4:14-21	X			X			X

Observations:

- DIVISIONS is a theme at the beginning (*narratio*) and at the end (*peroratio*), as well as in a part of the *argumentatio*.
- WISDOM is the theme that continues throughout all sections of the *argumentatio*.
- THE WORD OF THE CROSS is manifest as a theme at the beginning of the *argumentatio*
- BOASTING is a theme to which the argument tends to move:
 - in the first climax (1:29, 31)
 - in the second climax (first *peroratio*) (3:21)
 - in the final part (4:7) and through the related *φυσιόω* (in 4:6, 18, 19)
- THE SPIRIT is prominent in the central part of the *argumentatio* 2:6-16.
- BUILDING features only in one section but relates to DIVISIONS, APOSTLESHIP and even with WISDOM.
- APOSTLESHIP is present in the *narratio* and in the second half of 1 Cor 1-4; the message of the cross in 1 Cor 1-2 is succeeded by the theme of apostolic ministry in 1 Cor 3-4.

The most important conclusion for our purposes is that WISDOM is the theme that is consistently present during the central discussion in 1:18-4:13, even though its presence is a little less manifest in two segments (with one reference, in 3:10 and 4:10). None of the other themes can claim an equally central position. Most commentaries do not sufficiently bear this out. Only a few recent commentaries include WISDOM in the heading of 1 Cor 1:10-4:21: Schrage has “Die Gemeindespaltung aufgrund von Weisheitshypertrophie (Kreuz und Weisheit)” and Merklein: “Das Verhältnis der Verkündiger zur Gemeinde in

Lichte des Gekreuzigten als der wahren Weisheit Gottes“.¹⁰⁶ The importance WISDOM in 1 Cor 1-4 has been underestimated and this calls for renewed attention to this theme.

¹⁰⁶ Schrage 127; Merklein 95.

Chapter 6 Wisdom in Historical Context

1 Cor 1-4 shows a deep interest in wisdom. The origin of this interest does not lie with Paul – elsewhere he is silent on wisdom – but with the Corinthians. But how did they become charmed by wisdom? They must have had their own sources, so that a consideration of their religious context is in order here. In section 1 we will first discuss some general indications about wisdom in Corinth. Section 2 takes a closer look at Hellenistic Judaism with Philo of Alexandria as primary representative. That this rather wide but nevertheless sufficiently definable sphere is most likely the religious environment of the Corinthians in relation to wisdom, but not only to wisdom, will be borne out by a discussion of related subjects (salvation, the wise person, body and mind, eschatology, and revelation). In the first two sections of this chapter we compare Corinthian ideas, as they are reflected in Paul's letter, with Hellenistic-Jewish thought.

The third section of this chapter is concerned with Paul's position on wisdom within late Second Temple Judaism. In this comparison some writings, especially Baruch, Sirach, Wisdom of Solomon, Daniel and some ideas of Qumran are taken into account. Paul responds to the wisdom-hypertrophy of the Corinthians by explaining to them that there exists an irreconcilable conflict on wisdom, a contrast between the 'wisdom of the world' and the 'wisdom of God.' If they received their ideas from Hellenistic Judaism – a form that in 1 Cor 1-4 appears to belong to the wisdom of the world – where did Paul get his ideas on wisdom? That he speaks in terms of conflict, makes it unlikely that he drew from the same sources as they did. Was he inspired by the Apocalypticists or eschatological communities as the one known from Qumran? Eschatology certainly played an important role in the young Christian movement, but were these movements Paul's primary sources? After section 3 in this chapter offers some observations, the question of his sources will be continued in Part III.

1. *Wisdom in Corinth*

Outlining the religious-historical context of the Corinthians remains a precarious endeavour. We have to sail between the Scylla of agnosticism¹ and the Charybdis of omniscience.² 'Mirror reading' through supposing that the Corinthian situation is a mirror image of the letter's content, is methodically wrong. There is not a one to one

¹ E.g. Lindemann 14 is too sceptical: "Der Versuch einer systematischen Rekonstruktion der in Korinth vertretenen religiösen Haltungen ist mit großen Unsicherheiten behaftet; alle Versuche, das Denken der korinthischen Christen von religionsgeschichtlich auch sonst bekannten Phänomenen her deuten zu wollen, müssen überaus vage bleiben."

² E.g. the over-confident designs of F.C.Baur, "Die Christuspartei in der korinthischen Gemeinde, der Gegensatz des petrinischen und paulinischen Christentums in der alten Kirche, der Apostel Petrus in Rom," *Tübinger Zeitschrift für Theologie* 1831, Heft 4, 61-206; repr. in *Ausgewählte Werke in Einzelausgaben I* (Stuttgart: Frommann Verlag, 1963) 1-146 and W. Schmithals, *Die Gnosis in Korinth* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1956).

match of content and *Sitz im Leben*. The situation in Corinth is the occasion for the letter rather than its all-determining cause. Moreover, Paul interprets that situation. He does not take the Corinthian troubles at face value but uses ‘spiritual discernment’ (cf. 2:10–3:4) and tailors his response accordingly.

Even though we are unable to reconstruct the precise positions of the Corinthians, we can still have some understanding of their social and ideological climate. The positions of the Corinthians were the result of a confluence of Paul’s gospel with ideas and attitudes they had absorbed from their environment, in which ‘wisdom’ played a significant role. It has become evident in chapter 5 that wisdom is the central theme in 1 Cor 1–4. A look at the word statistics of σοφία, σοφός, μωρία, and μωρός supports these earlier conclusions:

	1 Cor 1–4	1 Cor	Paul ³	NT
σοφία	16	17	19	51
σοφός	10	11	15	20
μωρία	5	5	5	5
μωρός	4	4	4	14

Paul’s use of σοφία is concentrated in 1 Cor 1–4; there are only 3 instances elsewhere in his letters. It is not much different with σοφός (5 instances elsewhere). Moreover, only in 1 Cor 1–4 do we find Paul employing the semantic opposite μωρός, while the noun μωρία is unique for 1 Cor 1–4 within the whole of the New Testament. We can only conclude that Paul felt the need to respond to an excessive and misguided desire for wisdom in Corinth. The text of 1 Cor 1–4 gives a number of indications of the specific views on wisdom circulating in Corinth. We consider respectively 1) the problem of divisions, 2) Paul’s repudiation of σοφία λόγου, 3) the contribution of Apollos, and 4) the wider religion-historical background.

1) Striving after wisdom and party strife were related problems. It is likely that the news from Chloe’s people on divisive behaviour (1:11) also contained information on the Corinthians’ attitude to wisdom because the topic of wisdom arises in the wake of the discussion on divisions (1:17). Church members behaved arrogantly by lining up with one leader and by taking position against another (4:6). Quarrels were evident (1:11, 3:3) and it is probable that in these quarrels the desire for wisdom or the claim of being a wise person played a large role. Paul addresses a desire for wisdom when he writes “whoever among you considers himself wise (3:18)”⁴ and his statement “Greeks seek wisdom” (1:22) no doubt applied to the Corinthians. The expression οὐκ ἐν σοφίᾳ λόγου (1:17) only makes sense as a response and encourages the assumption that σοφία λόγου was more or less a requirement in Corinth, whether this specific word-combination was current in Corinth or not.⁵

³ This column represents the undisputed letters: 1 Thessalonians, Galatians, 1–2 Corinthians, Romans, Philippians, and Philemon.

⁴ Εἴ with the indicative indicates that this is really the case (BDR §372.1); therefore we do not translate “If someone ...” which suggests eventuality, but “whoever ...”

⁵ Lindemann 43 regards σοφία λόγου to be a Corinthian formula.

2) The phrase *οὐκ ἐν σοφίᾳ λόγου* is cryptic, however, and does not make plain what kind of wisdom the Corinthians were looking for. The simplest interpretation of *οὐκ ἐν σοφίᾳ λόγου* is ‘not in cleverness of speech’ (NASB), ‘sans sagesse de langage’ (BJ), or ‘not with eloquent wisdom’ (NRSV), in other words a refusal of a rhetorical presentation of the gospel.⁶ The problem with this interpretation, however, is that Paul continues in 1:18–25 with a refusal of wisdom as *content* and not with a refusal of a certain form of *speech*. *Σοφία λόγου* in 1:17 leads the apostle to speak of *σοφία τοῦ κόσμου* in 1:19–22. There must be a continuity of meaning between these two expressions. Therefore, *σοφία λόγου* is not a matter of speech only, but also a matter of content.⁷ In 1:18–2:5 both sides of *σοφία λόγου*, content and speech, are present:⁸ 1:18–31 deals with the content of wisdom, while 2:1–5 is more concerned with the rhetorical side.

3) A number of times we encounter the name of Apollos.⁹ We hear of him in connection with factions (1:11–12; 3:3–4) and as a fully acknowledged co-worker (3:22, 4:6). The closing part of the letter also mentions Apollos. Paul asked him several times to visit the church again but Apollos decided it was not the right time to go (16:12).¹⁰ This shows that Apollos did not belong to the group of companions that could be directed by Paul, as was the case with Timothy (4:17) and a number of others (cf. Acts 20:4). Apollos was in this respect independent.¹¹ Nevertheless, for Paul the Corinthians caused the problem, not Apollos. If Paul thought Apollos was wrong, he would have made that clear. “In view of Galatians, one can hardly argue that Paul would not have criticized another apostle in a public letter.”¹² That his person had become a factor in the Corinthian divisions may account for Apollos’ hesitancy to return to the Achaean city. In the book of Acts Apollos is also linked with Corinth (19:1) and in that context Alexandrian origins, rhetorical ability, and knowledge of the Scriptures are attributed to him (18:24).¹³ Alexandria was a city where Jewish–Hellenistic wisdom thrived. It is not too farfetched to suppose that through Apollos or through others like him, the interest in wisdom increased. Because the subject of wisdom does not receive treatment elsewhere in Paul’s

⁶ Thus BDAG s.v. 1a; Meyer 30; Strobel 44; Schnabel 103–5: “nicht durch gewandte Rede”; Thiselton 143: “It is plausible to associate *σοφία* with practical instrumental cleverness or skill, and *λόγος* with calculative communication. On this basis Paul may well mean *not by manipulative rhetoric*.”

⁷ Cf. Bousset 68; Weiss 23: “*σοφία* ist der Hauptbegriff”; Schlatter 78; Fee 64: “The emphasis is first of all on content”; Witherington 104; Wolff 33.

⁸ Regarding *σοφία λόγου*: “Was Paulus meint, wird durch den ganzen Kontext bis 2:5 erläutert” (Conzelmann 56).

⁹ This shortened form of Ἀπολλώνιος (cf. Acts 18:24 Cod D) was popular in Egypt (Weiss XXXI).

¹⁰ Περὶ δὲ Ἀπολλῶ τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ, πολλὰ παρεκάλεσα αὐτὸν ἵνα ἔλθῃ πρὸς ὑμᾶς μετὰ τῶν ἀδελφῶν· καὶ πάντως οὐκ ἦν θέλημα ἵνα νῦν ἔλθῃ, ἐλεύσεται δὲ ὅταν εὐκαιρήσῃ.

¹¹ M. Konradt, “Korinthische Weisheit,” 214, n.160.

¹² Witherington 87.

¹³ Weiss XXXI: “Der Bericht der Apostelgeschichte ist klar und einwandfrei in v.24”: Ἰουδαῖος δὲ τις Ἀπολλῶς ὀνόματι, Ἀλεξανδρεὺς τῷ γένει, ἀνὴρ λόγιος, .. δυνατὸς ὢν ἐν ταῖς γραφαῖς.

letters, we may safely assume that it was not a regular subject for Paul. It is very unlikely that he occupied himself with a wisdom school, as Conzelmann proposed. If someone did so, Apollos would be the one to teach in that manner.¹⁴

4) The wider religious-historical context contributed to the Corinthians' interest in wisdom. In the following discussion we move back in time from Gnosticism to Hellenistic Judaism, especially as it has been influenced by Stoicism. The Corinthians' high esteem for wisdom was not an internal development within the church based on Pauline teaching, but more a result of external influences.¹⁵ During a period in the twentieth century, scholars considered Gnosticism the major influence in the church of Corinth but we can no longer ascribe the striving after wisdom to this source any more.¹⁶ Gnosticism is well documented from the second century onwards but a proto-Gnosticism in the first century remains hypothetical. Scholars have abandoned the former wide definition of Gnosticism and replaced it with a more precise one.¹⁷ From this clearer perspective, the teaching that Paul confronts in 1 Cor 1-4 "differs considerably from the knowledge the Gnostics once claimed to have about an innate spark of the divine, differing from body and soul, which enabled them to escape from the degrading and demonic elements of this visible world and to come to 'know' the unknown god who provides redemption for those who through this knowledge are related to him."¹⁸

However, Gnosticism was not a separate or isolated phenomenon. It was a particular development within the larger Hellenistic religious and philosophical climate of thought. The movement incorporated in its mythology diverse religious elements, not in the least from Jewish and Christian sources.¹⁹ In his 1959 monograph on the religious-

¹⁴ Conzelmann, "Paulus und die Weisheit," *NTS* 12 (1966) 231-44; "If anyone had cultivated a wisdom-school, in Corinth at least, it was not Paul but Apollos" (R.A. Horsley, "Wisdom of Word and Words of Wisdom in Corinth," *CBQ* 39 [1977] 232).

¹⁵ Merklein 119; Voss, *Wort*, 49.

¹⁶ Cf. J. -M. Sevrin, "La Gnose à Corinthe. Questions de Méthode et Observations sur 1 Co 1,17-3,3," in *The Corinthian Correspondence* (ed. R. Bieringer; Leuven: Peeters, 1996) 121-39.

¹⁷ A wide definition, as employed in the beginning of the 20th century, included according to M. Hengel "the dualism of Qumran and other Jewish apocalyptic texts, *hekhalot* mysticism, Hermeticism, Philo and Neoplatonism," as well as the Fourth Gospel. Gnosticism should, however, be more precisely defined "in terms of the anti-cosmic dualistic-ontological systems from the second and third centuries with strong philosophical features, which interpret the creation of the material world as the work of very inferior angels, and reject the salvation history of Israel and the physical death of Christ" (M. Hengel, *The Johannine Question* [London: SCM, 1989] 113).

¹⁸ Fitzmyer 34.

¹⁹ "There is great ingenuity in adapting the borrowed detail to the grand Gnostic design which in all the extravagance of embroidery is never lost sight of. All this is possible only in a historically 'late', distinctly literate, and thoroughly syncretistic situation." H. Jonas, "Delimitation of the Gnostic Phenomenon," in *Le Origini dello Gnosticismo* (ed. U. Bianchi; Leiden: Brill, 1970) 90-108, 101. Jonas comments on the Gnostic-Christian connection: "What matters is that Gnosticism is roughly contemporaneous with the infancy of Christianity; that it is different and independent from it, but with natural points of contact, answering to the same human situation;

historical background of 1 Cor 1-2, Wilckens rightly dealt not only with Gnosticism but also extensively with Stoicism and Hellenistic-Jewish thought.²⁰ After Gnosticism left the scene as the determining influence in Corinth we cannot brush aside the many parallels that exist between the Corinthians' views surfacing in the letter and Stoic as well as Jewish-Hellenistic thought. Wilckens regards the features of the spiritual climate in Corinth, which he previously interpreted as Gnostic, now as indications of a fertile breeding-ground for Gnosticism.²¹ The goal in both Stoicism and Gnosticism is to conquer the world through the power of one's own inner being. A man becomes wise or perfect by means of his own essential being.²²

Stoicism and Hellenistic-Judaism are related movements. The ideas of Stoicism were particularly attractive for Jews in the Hellenistic world, who were deeply aware of the gulf between their own religious heritage and the forms of life throughout the Greco-Roman world. Especially pagan religious practices were distasteful to them (cf. Acts 14:11-18; 17:16, 24-29). Hellenistic Jews continued and expanded the critical satire of the Old Testament prophets. For example, Wis 11-16 unmasks the various forms of worship in Egypt and presents them as a paradigm of paganism. While Jews in the Hellenistic world abhorred Greek religion, they valued Greek philosophy. They felt attracted to the philosophical traditions of Platonism and Neo-Pythagoreanism because these affirmed transcendence. In a Greek environment the Jews with their austere faith appeared as a race of sages in their own right. In the area of ethics, their fervor and emphasis on attitude and character agreed with Stoicism. Moreover, this movement was

and that from the start there was vigorous interpenetration of the two which provoked the well-known reactions in the church" (103).

²⁰ U. Wilckens, *Weisheit und Torheit. Eine exegetisch-religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung zu 1 Kor. 1 und 2* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1959). Besides 40 pages dedicated to parallel ideas in Gnosticism, 60 deal with Jewish wisdom of the Hellenistic period (including 20 pages on Philo), and another 40 with Stoicism.

²¹ Wilckens' conclusion after the revision in "Zu 1 Kor 2,1-16," 537: "Weder die korinthische noch die paulinische Theologie sind gnostisch beeinflusst gewesen. Die Gnosis ist vielmehr überlieferungsgeschichtlich eine spätere Bewegung, in der zweifellos sowohl die urchristliche Tradition wie auch die breit rezipierte jüdische massiv hellenisiert worden sind." Cf. "Le gnosticisme peut se catalyser dans le christianisme" (Sevrin, "Gnose à Corinthe," 130).

²² Wilckens, *Weisheit*, 270: "Beiden geht es im Grunde um eine Überwindung der Welt in der Kraft des eigenen Wesens." To cast the net even wider: The principle that man must find the resources for salvation within his own self or in connection with the cosmos is valid for ancient Greek thought in general, cf. H. de Lubac, "Le Paradoxe de l'Homme ignoré des Gentils," in *À la Rencontre de Dieu. Méorial Albert Gelin* (Le Puy: Éditions Xavier Mappus, 1961) 397-414: "Pour les anciens Grecs .. tout nature doit trouver en elle-même ou dans le reste du cosmos de quoi s'achever. Tout, au fond, est depuis toujours en parfait équilibre. Le déséquilibre apparent, progrès ou régression, n'est qu'une phénomène de flux et de reflux dans un ensemble déjà donné tout entier. L'univers est comme un serpent recourbé sur lui-même: son mouvement est nécessairement éternel, et c'est un mouvement circulaire. La célèbre théorie stoïcienne de la 'Grande année' n'est qu'une systématisation de cette vue partout diffuse. *Novissima prima*: le principe est rigoureux. On n'obtient jamais en fin de compte que ce qu'on avait, peut-être seulement sous une autre forme, dès le début (398).

not only able to give a place to fate and providence but also to the relative value of national religious beliefs, because of its “rather fluid conception of god.”²³

Hellenistic Judaism flourished especially in and around the Diaspora synagogues and educated Jews, proselytes, and God-fearers would feel at home under its umbrella. It is quite reasonable to suppose that many of the first Christians in Corinth already had some interest in the Jewish faith before they accepted Paul’s message of salvation. The pattern of the apostle’s mission practice was one of ever widening circles (Rom 15:19, cf. 1 Thess 1:8) but its starting point was the synagogue (cf. Rom 1:16). Part of the church in Corinth was Jewish by birth (cf. 1 Cor 7:18, 12:13). That the majority had a non-Jewish background (cf. 1 Cor 12:2) does not mean that they were Gentiles or pagans attracted out of the blue. The ethical and religious problems (esp. 6:9–11; 8:7), which Fee attributes to the Christians’ pagan heritage,²⁴ may very well arise in a context of Hellenized Judaism. This was a broad movement, taking up a wide spectrum between Jewish and Greek.²⁵ A Hellenistic-Jewish life view would tend to imply a dualist anthropology that was able to justify a continuation of pagan practices.²⁶ We may expect that in the midst of Greco-Roman culture, the early Christians would have to struggle with cognitive dissonance because Paul’s sharp pronouncements did not make life comfortable. The trend in Corinth would probably be to tone down the radical Christian beliefs and practices the apostle had preached. In that situation the synthesis which Hellenistic Judaism provided between a Greek rational sense and Jewish tradition could function as a religious-philosophical frame of reference.

Hellenistic Jewish ideas were widely available, either in local variety or as imported goods. Just like the harbors of Corinth, its church was open to what the winds did bring. The East and Egypt sent all kinds of cargo, material and immaterial. Even Paul’s relatively short absence of a few years would have been enough for a significant development. Paul was very disturbed about the shift in orientation that had taken place among the Galatians οὕτως ταχέως (Gal 1:6). A turn could easily take place and in his letters Paul seems to have had a more than average antenna for shifting foundations. We conclude that there is enough reason to suppose that Jewish-Hellenistic wisdom had been welcomed in Corinth as a supplement to Paul’s teaching. Teachers used dubious material

²³ K. Algra, “Stoic Theology,” in *The Cambridge Companion to the Stoics* (ed. B. Inwood; Cambridge: University Press, 2003) 169.

²⁴ Fee 4, cf. 14, n.36: “If Paul is attacking a form of Hellenized Judaism, it is most perceptible as Hellenism, not Judaism.”

²⁵ Cf. P.W. van der Horst, “The Interpretation of the Bible by the Minor Hellenistic Jewish Authors,” in *Mikra* 519–46, who concludes regarding authors of the period 250–50 BCE: “The variety not only of literary forms but also of religious outlooks of these Hellenized Jews is so great that they can hardly be reduced to a common denominator” (544).

²⁶ Cf. Merklein 133; G. Sellin, *Der Streit um die Auferstehung der Toten. Eine religionsgeschichtliche und exegetische Untersuchung von 1 Korinther 15* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986) 57–61, makes plausible that a Hellenistic-Jewish *pneuma*-theology functioned as a justification for old pagan practices. The reasoning is as follows: the person who has become a pneumatic, is free; what his body does is not relevant for his salvation; therefore it is not necessary to break with old pagan ties.

in building on Paul's foundation. This foundation needed to be defended (3:10,11) and the apostle wrote that they urgently needed a refresher course (1 Cor 4:17). We conclude that in their search for wisdom the Corinthians were primarily inspired and influenced by Jewish-Hellenistic traditions. The next section will offer some considerations to substantiate this view, even though within the scope of this study the attention to this matter has to be limited.

An important implication of the arguments in this chapter is that Paul would not be eager to tap the same sources as the Corinthians did. Instead, the apostle turned to the Prophets when he formulated his own views. As his citations and allusions suggest, he needed Scripture to accomplish his purposes.

2. Corinthian Affinities with Hellenistic Judaism

The major source for comparing the Jewish-Hellenistic tradition with the position of the Corinthians is Philo of Alexandria (ca. 25 BC- 40 AD).²⁷ Philo is the best representative we have of Hellenistic-Jewish wisdom theology in Paul's time. H. Chadwick noted the importance of Philo for the understanding of the Corinthian letters.²⁸ While Paul and Philo shared many commonplaces of their time,²⁹ in contrast with Paul in 1 Cor 1, Philo "affirms the positive value of education and intellectual discipline as a preparation for the knowledge of God."³⁰

Philo's system drew from different sources: Stoicism furnished moral values and philosophical categories,³¹ Neo-Pythagoreanism gave insights to come closer to the final mystical goal, and Neo-Platonist philosophy provided rules for interpreting Scripture.³²

²⁷ Cf. P. Borgen, *Philo of Alexandria. An Exegete for his Time* (Leiden: Brill, 1997) 14-5 on datable events in his life.

²⁸ H. Chadwick, "St. Paul and Philo of Alexandria," *BJRL* 48 (1966) 286-307; 295-9 on the Corinthian letters.

²⁹ Chadwick, "Paul and Philo," 294, 297: such as on conscience, on spirituality as athletics, and on the complementarity of the parts of the body.

³⁰ Chadwick, "Paul and Philo," 296, n.5: this is "the central thesis of *de Congressu*."

³¹ "Die Stoa ist von Haus aus eine Weltanschauung des autonomen Menschen, der sich mit dem Gesetz des Kosmos verbunden weiss durch den Logos, der in ihm ebenso wie im Kosmos herrscht. Philon dagegen versteht es, Kategorien, die vornehmlich der Stoa entliehen sind, zu Ausdrucksmitteln einer Sehnsucht umzudeuten, in der die Seele ihre Geborgenheit und ihre Seligkeit in einer bis nahe an die Verschmelzung heranreichenden Annäherung an die Gottheit sucht" (Y. Amir, *Die hellenistische Gestalt des Judentums bei Philon von Alexandrien* [Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 1983] 190).

³² Cf. Strobel 62-4 (excursus on 1 Cor 2:6-16), who also emphasizes Philo's desire to interpret Scripture according to the mood and the need of his time: "Das alttestamentliche Wort wird zur Grundlage eines ethischen Mystizismus mit manchen philosophisch-eklektizistischen Einschlägen. Die Thora wird als eine mystische Schrift gedeutet, wobei der streng ethische Geist der jüdischen Gesetzfrömmigkeit aber nie aufgegeben ist und auch nie aufgegeben werden sollte. Hand in hand geht damit der Entwurf einer Weisheitslehre, die an der Gewinnung eines Bildes vom Idealmenschen arbeitet" (64).

The mood of the time showed a desire to integrate different philosophical currents into what became Middle Platonism. A number of decades ago Posidonius was held to be Philo's essential source, but more recently scholars emphasize strong Neo-Pythagorean influences, which were already propagated a generation before Philo by his fellow-citizen Eudoros.³³ Another Alexandrian, Philo's predecessor in the philosophical interpretation of Jewish Scripture, Aristobulus, also underwent these influences and called Pythagoras (besides Plato) a pupil of Moses.³⁴

The writings of Philo stand in a long tradition of Judaism's interaction with Hellenism, an interaction that already began three centuries earlier.³⁵ Especially relevant is also the Wisdom of Solomon, which stands historically and religious-philosophically between Jesus Sirach and Philo. Von Lips lists the following other writings as sources for the Jewish-Hellenistic wisdom tradition: The Letter of Aristeas, 4 Maccabees, Pseudo-Phocylides, Joseph and Aseneth, the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, and Aristobulus.³⁶ In the recent period, many scholars believe that the specific Corinthian interest in wisdom should be seen against the background of this religious-philosophical development of Judaism in the Hellenistic world.³⁷

The connection between 1 Cor 1-4 and Philo has also been explored by B. Winter.³⁸ Yet Winter's approach differs significantly from the one presented here. In this divergence the interpretation of οὐκ ἐν σοφίᾳ λόγου (1:17) plays an important role. While in our view the expression at least partly refers to religious content, Winter interprets οὐκ ἐν σοφίᾳ λόγου as a question of speech only and accordingly, in combination with 2:1-5, takes it as an anti-Sophistic statement. This leads to an analogy between Paul and Philo, who attacked the practice of the Alexandrian Sophists in his

³³ Sellin, *Auferstehung*, 114-5; cf. on Eudoros: M. Neher, *Wesen und Wirken der Weisheit in der Sapientia Salomonis* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2004), 218-25; also J. Dillon, *The Middle Platonists* (London: Duckworth, 1977) 115-35 on Eudorus as a source for Philo instead of Posidonius, because the latter as a Stoic lacks transcendence and the recognition of a higher authority (134).

³⁴ Sellin, *Streit*, 115-25; cf. on Aristobulus: Hengel, *Judentum und Hellenismus* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1969, 1988) 295-307.

³⁵ M. Hengel, *Judentum*, documents the large extent of interaction in Palestine already in the early phase from Alexander the Great until the middle of the second century BC.

³⁶ Von Lips, *Weisheitliche Traditionen*, 105-14.

³⁷ Strobel 62; Merklein 127-33; Wolff 9-10; Voss, *Wort*, 49, 146-52; Wilckens, "Zu 1 Kor 2,1-16", 532-34; B.A. Pearson, *The Pneumatikos-Psychikos Terminology in 1 Corinthians* (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1973); R.G. Hamerton-Kelly, *Pre-Existence, Wisdom, and the Son of Man* (Cambridge: University Press, 1973); J. A. Davis, *Wisdom and Spirit. An Investigation of 1 Corinthians 1.18-3.20 against the Background of Jewish Sapiential Traditions in the Greco-Roman Period* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1984). J. Theis, *Paulus als Weisheitslehrer: der Gekreuzigte und die Weisheit Gottes in 1 Kor 1-4* (Regensburg: Pustet, 1991) 454-62; G. Sellin, "Das 'Geheimnis' der Weisheit und das Rätsel der 'Christuspartei'," *ZNW* 73 (1982) 69-96; Idem, *Streit*, on Philo in particular: 92-172; G.E. Sterling, "'Wisdom among the Perfect:' Creation Traditions in Alexandrian Judaism and Corinthian Christianity," *NovT* 37 (1995) 355-79; R.A. Horsley, *Wisdom and spiritual transcendence at Corinth: studies in First Corinthians* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2008).

³⁸ B. Winter, *Philo and Paul among the Sophists* (Cambridge: University Press, 1997).

writings. Furthermore, the agreement between Paul and Philo may be extended because – beyond their anti-sophistic stance – they nevertheless hold to a positive view of public speaking.³⁹ We believe, however, that too much of Paul’s response in 1 Cor 1–4 remains unaccounted for if Sophist practice were his primary target. The phrase οὐκ ἐν σοφίᾳ λόγου and all it entails is much better understood as a countering of Hellenistic-Jewish influence.⁴⁰ In the following paragraphs we will explore Philo’s views in the areas of salvation, the wise person, body and mind, and eschatology. We will evaluate whether these views throw light on the Corinthian practices and beliefs as reflected in Paul’s letter.

Salvation

In discussing wisdom Paul refers to salvation in 1:18, 21. But he does not connect salvation with wisdom but with foolishness in the form of the message of the cross. He drives a wedge between salvation and the wisdom valued by the Corinthians. He separates what presumably was very closely associated in the Corinthian way of thinking.

We have observed in the previous section that the phrase ἐν σοφίᾳ λόγου in 1 Cor 1:17 pertains to both form and content. R.A. Horsley has drawn attention to the fact that the combination of wisdom as content and wisdom as eloquent speech figures prominently in Philo and the Wisdom of Solomon. He remarks that this background “elucidates the two aspects of *sophia* to which Paul reacts in 1 Corinthians, the ‘wisdom of word’ as well as the more soteriologically substantive *sophia*.”⁴¹ In Philo and Wisdom of Solomon the content of σοφία is closely related to salvation. Wisdom functions as a means of salvation in the Wisdom of Solomon. In Wis 9:1 we find a king’s prayer for wisdom; the prayer ends in 9:18 with the programmatic statement about those who were taught, τῇ σοφίᾳ ἐσώθησαν. This phrase is also the theme of the next chapter, which presents an overview of the saving work of wisdom in history; πάλιν ἔσωσεν σοφία

³⁹ Philo criticizes empty sophistry but does not reject eloquence. In *Migration* (70) he interprets καὶ εὐλογήσω σε (LXX Gen 12:2) as an endowment of excellence (contained in εὖ) in both the areas of reason and speech (λόγος). “(God) bestows on those who obey Him no imperfect boon. All His gifts are full and complete. And so, in this case also, He does not send the blessing of ‘logos-excellence’ (εὐλογία) in one division of logos, but in both parts, for He holds it just that the recipient of His bounty should both conceive the noblest conceptions and give masterly expression to his ideas. For perfection (τελειότης) depends, as we know, on both divisions of logos, the reason which suggests the ideas with clearness, and the speech which gives unfailing expression to them.” (Philo, *Mig.* 73 [Colson and Whitaker, LCL]); cf. also *Det.* 40, where speech – in an allegorical interpretation of Moses and Aäron – is called a brother and a mouth-piece of the intellect.

⁴⁰ Σοφία and λόγος often occur together in Hellenistic Jewish tradition. In Sir 4:24 we read ἐν λόγῳ γνωσθήσεται σοφία (cf. 18:28), followed by καὶ παιδεία ἐν ῥήματι γλώσσης in the second line. Sirach shows that Jewish wisdom and Hellenistic culture find each other in the same desire for moral education (παιδεία, ‘Bildung’; cf. Hengel, *Judentum*, 243). Furthermore, ‘wisdom’ in Sirach tends towards an exclusive character because this type of learning is not open to people of all social classes. Artisans who work with their hands are not considered to have time for wisdom. It is pre-eminently a σοφία γραμματέως (38:24; see 38:24–34; cf 1 Cor 1:20).

⁴¹ Horsley, “Wisdom of Word,” 229.

(10:4) counts as a refrain. The meaning of ‘salvation’ in the book is almost always ‘preservation’ in times of danger, but in some places the company of wisdom also ensures immortality (8:13, 17: ἀθανασία ἐστὶν ἐν συγγενείᾳ σοφίας) and the keeping of wisdom’s laws guarantees incorruption (6:19).⁴²

The function of wisdom in Wis 6–10⁴³ finds a further development in Philo. In his philosophy “wisdom is a straight high road, and it is when the mind’s course is guided along that road that it reaches the goal which is the recognition and knowledge of God” (γνώσις καὶ ἐπιστήμη θεοῦ, *Deus*, 143; cf. *Post.* 18). With the help of his recurring allegorical interpretation of Numbers 20:17, Philo calls wisdom the King’s Highway, the road “by which alone suppliant souls can make their escape to the Uncreated. For we may well believe that he who walks unimpeded along the king’s way will never flag or faint, till he comes into the presence of the king.” (*Deus*, 160). For Philo “salvation consists of knowledge (ἐπιστήμη, γνώσις), because this transfers man from the mortal to the immortal realm, where everything is spirit. ... This type of salvation, which can be summarized as ‘Entweltlichung’, is the governing theme with Philo.⁴⁴ While others are dependent on the Logos situated between God and man, the σοφός stands directly under God.⁴⁵ The same is true for the τέλειος. Both belong to the highest category, while others – as προκόπτων – have to strive for virtue and knowledge of God. Even Joseph, the model of a governor, and Jacob, the type of an ascetic, were not ‘perfect’ and have not attained to divine wisdom.⁴⁶ Wisdom is both the means and the content of divine revelation.⁴⁷

This makes it important to consider Paul’s utterances about salvation in connection with or apart from wisdom. In the first place, we read that it is God’s purpose to save (σῶσαι) those who *believe* (1:21). For Paul *faith* and not *wisdom* is a requirement for salvation. This takes salvation out of the elitist circle of the wise and places it within the reach of everyone. A second Pauline characteristic is that God’s wisdom is inextricably bound up with the crucified Christ. Salvation is given through the crucified Christ “who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption” (1:30). Thus thirdly, wisdom is a gift all the way from God to man. Fourthly, she is not the only gift. She is one among others and does not possess the highest position in a hierarchy towards God. There is no hierarchy between wisdom and other gifts (cf. 1:30 and 2:7, referring to the gift of ‘glory’).

⁴² Cf. D. Noël, “Quelle Sotériologie dans le Livre de la Sagesse?” in *La Sagesse Biblique de l’Ancien au Nouveau Testament* (ed. J. Trublet; Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1995) 189.

⁴³ K. Rudolph, “Sophia und Gnosis,” in *Altes Testament – Frühjudentum – Gnosis* (ed. K.-W. Tröger; Gütersloh: Mohn, 1980) 225: “Den eigentlichen Schritt zur ‘mythisch-spekulativen Divinisierung’ der Weisheit belegt uns erst SapSal (1. Jh. v. Chr.), doch dürfte sie schon älter sein.”

⁴⁴ Sellin, *Auferstehung*, 127.

⁴⁵ Sellin, *Auferstehung*, 160–1.

⁴⁶ This changed for Jacob when he became ‘Israel,’ that is, according to Philo ‘the seeing one’ (Sellin, *Auferstehung*, 156–57; G. Dellings, “The ‘One who sees God’ in Philo,” in *Nourished in Peace* [ed. F.E. Greenspahn et al.; Chico: Scholars Press, 1984] 17–40.

⁴⁷ Wilckens, “σοφία κτλ,” *TWNT* 7: 501–3.

By emphasizing the cross (1:17, 18) Paul agrees with the Wisdom of Solomon that wisdom is found in history. In Philo things are different. The horizontal ‘way of wisdom’ of earlier Jewish wisdom literature (Prov; Sir; Wis) has become a vertical ascension of the soul. In Philo only heavenly wisdom offers salvation.⁴⁸ From a Philonic perspective it is very difficult to conceive that a historical event (the cross) brings eternal salvation, simply because in Philo’s system the significance of events on the level of history evaporates. The horizontal dimension of history tends to be replaced by an inner and vertical dimension of salvation. D.T. Runia puts it this way:

Of crucial importance for Philo’s view of Judaism, in my opinion, is the fact that he shows absolutely no interest in history. In his thought all emphasis is placed on structural elements, on the place of man in reality and his relation to the divine. He is interested in the question of the relation between time and eternity, but does not consider the possibility that an event of shattering importance could take place in the course of time as experienced here on earth.⁴⁹

This does not mean that history is absent in Philo. He compares God’s stance towards history with the *προνοία* of a captain who “casts cargo overboard to provide for the safety of the passengers” (*Praem.* 33).⁵⁰ Philo does take note of world history and yet the rise and fall of one kingdom after the other signify for him a lack of true reality. History is like a dance directed by the divine word or determined by fortune.⁵¹ Philo presupposes the reality of history and always takes his starting point from it, as is evident in his interpretation of Scripture, but history itself is not the locus of salvation.⁵² In this view of history, Philo differs from the Wisdom of Solomon and Old Testament Scripture.

Just like wisdom, the issue of salvation is prominent in 1 Cor 1. This suggests that for Paul wisdom, in the form cherished by the Corinthians, was damaging for salvation. In 1:17b he says this in so many words: σοφία λόγου empties the cross. The pericope 1 Cor 1:18-25 carries much weight in Paul’s theology. Fitzmyer even claims that 1 Cor

⁴⁸ Rudolph, “Sophia,” 226: “Die irdische Weisheit hat keine Heilsbedeutung.”

⁴⁹ “Philo, Alexandrian and Jew,” in D.T. Runia, *Exegesis and Philosophy: Studies on Philo of Alexandria* (Aldershot: Variorum, 1990) 1-18, citation from p.12. Cf. “Philo kennt kein unmittelbares Walten Gottes in der Geschichte” (L. Goppelt, *Typos. Die typologische Deutung des Alten Testaments im Neuen* [Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1939, 1973] 59).

⁵⁰ This divine foresight functions as a theodicy: “The question before us is not whether the events are pleasant to us personally but whether the chariot and the ship of the universe (κόσμος) is guided in safety (σωτηρίως) like a well-ordered state” (*Praem.* 34, Colson, LCL).

⁵¹ Χορεύει γὰρ ἐν κύκλῳ λόγος ὁ θεῖος, ὃν οἱ πολλοὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ὀνομάζουσι τύχην, adding: “Presently in its ceaseless flux it makes distribution city by city, nation by nation, country by country. What these had once, those have now,” *Deus*, 176). “So then in all wherewith men concern themselves there is no solid work, no ‘matter’, only a shadow or a breath which flits past, before it has real existence” (*Deus*, 177).

⁵² The statement of Dellling, “One Who Sees,” 41: “Philo understands the incident at the Jabbok as an event basic to the Jewish religion,” is misleading. For Philo the true *interpretation* of the Scriptural passage (i.e. Israel is the ‘seeing one’) is basic for the Jewish religion.

1:21–24 contains the key to Pauline theology and he calls this key ‘Christological soteriology.’⁵³ The message of the cross (1:18) “puts Christ himself at the centre of soteriology, God’s new mode of salvation, and all else in Pauline teaching has to be understood in relation to it.”⁵⁴ When Paul emphasizes the crucified Christ he does not seek to rehabilitate history as such. He wants to place Christ in the centre as God’s means of salvation. And yet, history is indispensable because he adds “and him crucified” (2:2).

The wise person

Σοφία and σοφός are terms that belong together. Those who prided themselves as being σοφός would also claim to possess σοφία. Nevertheless, the self-description σοφός has a significance of its own. We find this in Stoic philosophy that “has the *sophos* himself, in his conduct, as its necessary subject.”⁵⁵ We observe the same tendency in Hellenistic Judaism, for example in Sirach 44–50, a pageant of “Heroes of Israel’s past” (NEB). Von Rad remarks on the difference with older presentations of Israel’s history, that Sirach accords the central position not to the acts of God but to the political and spiritual achievements of great men, albeit with the help of God. We walk through this history as through a “hall of fame.”⁵⁶ The classical prophets become important in Jewish wisdom literature as types of the wise man (Sir 44–49; Wis 7:27, 11:1). This becomes a determining idea in Philo’s wisdom literature.⁵⁷

In our text, Paul targets his arguments especially against the Corinthians’ claim to be σοφοί, rather than against a claim to possess σοφία. Paul says εἴ τις δοκεῖ σοφὸς εἶναι ἐν ὑμῖν (3:18) and not εἴ τις δοκεῖ σοφίαν ἔχειν ἐν ὑμῖν. The emphasis on σοφός and its rejection continues throughout the text: Ἀπολῶ τὴν σοφίαν τῶν σοφῶν 1:19; τοῦ σοφός; 1:20; οὐ πολλοὶ σοφοὶ κατὰ σάρκα 1:26. This emphasis is also heard in ὑμεῖς δὲ φρόνιμοι ἐν Χριστῷ (4:10) and τὸν λόγον τῶν πεφυσιωμένων (4:19). The terms τέλειος (2:6) and πνευματικός (3:1, cf. also Εἴ τις δοκεῖ προφήτης εἶναι ἢ πνευματικός 1 Cor 14:37) function in the text as synonyms of σοφός.

Paul, in his response, avoids calling himself or Apollos a σοφός, a title that belongs to Greek individualist ethics and to the religious philosophy of Hellenized Jews. The apostle, apparently, does not want to establish himself in the field chosen by the elitist Corinthians.⁵⁸ Even though he claims σοφίαν λαλοῦμεν (2:6), this does not make him call

⁵³ Fitzmyer 69.

⁵⁴ Fitzmyer 70.

⁵⁵ J. Goetzmann, “Wisdom,” in *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology III* (ed. C. Brown; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978) 1027.

⁵⁶ Von Rad, *Weisheit*, 330–1.

⁵⁷ D. Lührmann, *Das Offenbarungsverständnis bei Paulus und in paulinischen Gemeinden* (Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 1965) 35: “Die grosse Bedeutung der klassischen Propheten für die Weisheitsliteratur erklärt sich wohl daher, dass sie versuchte, in ihnen Typoi der Weisen zu finden – ein Gedanke, der dann in der Weiterführung der Weisheitsliteratur bei Philo bestimmend wird.” Lührmann speaks of a “weisheitliche Neuprägung des Prophetenbegriffs” (35).

⁵⁸ The only self-description that contains the term (σοφός ἀρχιτέκτων in 3:10) is not his own but derives from LXX Isaiah, as will be argued in a later chapter.

himself a wise man. Paul does not care about being a σοφός but about conveying σοφία. He even uses σοφός with a considerable amount of irony (e.g. 3:18, 6:5). In a radically different way Paul describes himself and Apollos as διάκονοι (3:5), ὑπηρέται and οἰκονόμοι (4:1). These terms do not draw attention to the persons themselves but to the cause or person they serve. While the Corinthians are especially interested in their own status and would like to be called σοφός, Paul's apostolic existence (4:9–13) challenges their conception of the wise man. Their ideal of the wise man is inner fortitude and tranquility,⁵⁹ he openly confesses that his experience is “weakness, and fear, and trembling (2:3).” There is a sharp contrast between Paul's self-description and Philo's portrayal of Abraham's appearance: “For the divine spirit which was breathed upon him from on high made its lodging in his soul, and invested his body with singular beauty, his voice with persuasiveness (τοῖς δὲ λόγοις πειθώ, cf. 1 Cor 2:4), and his hearers with understanding.”⁶⁰ In this passage, Philo describes Abraham as the model proselyte: “He is the standard of nobility for all proselytes” (οὗτος ἅπασιν ἐπηλύταις εὐγενείας ἐστι κανών, *Virt.* 219). Abraham appeared a king in the eyes of those among whom he settled, not in the literal sense for his entourage was that of an ordinary man (ιδιώτης γὰρ ἦν), but in the figurative sense because he had the mind (φρόνημα) of a king and a more than human perfection (τελειότερας οὐσης ἢ κατὰ ἄνθρωπον).⁶¹ Paul also denies the possession of εὐγενεία to his readers: οὐ πολλοὶ εὐγενεῖς (1:26), but he does not replace this with a moral or religious nobility. Instead, he continues ἀλλὰ .. τὰ ἀγενῆ τοῦ κόσμου .. ἐξελέξατο ὁ θεός (1:26–28). Salvation does not depend on nobility, riches, power, or wisdom in any form but on the work of God.

Many commentators refer to Philo in their discussion of τελείος.⁶² According to Philo the man who has attained salvation is a true ruler and king; he is also self-taught (αὐτομαθής καὶ αὐτοδίδακτος) and called both σοφός and τέλειος.⁶³ When Paul responds to the Corinthians' tendency to exalt particular leaders, with “Let no one boast in men for all things are yours (3:21), he seems to take up a formula circulating in

⁵⁹ For the Stoics “tranquillity is based on the knowledge that one has all the goods one could desire, or rather, the only real good, namely virtue; ... This is epitomized in the famous dictum “*omnia mea mecum sunt*” (Seneca, *const.* 5,6) ... The wise person's mind is not just free from trouble, but imperturbable, beyond the reach of fortune's changes.” (G. Striker, “*Ataraxia: Happiness as Tranquillity*,” in Idem, *Essays on Hellenistic Epistemology and Ethics* [Cambridge: University Press, 1996] 187).

⁶⁰ Philo, *Virt.*, 217 (Colson, LCL). For a discussion of the treatise *De Abrahamo* in connection with *Virt.* 211–19, see Borgen, *Philo*, 217–24, who stresses that Philo presents Abraham as a model for proselytes to imitate. Cf. also R.A. Horsley, “Wisdom of Word and Words of Wisdom in Corinth,” *CBQ* 39 (1977) 235.

⁶¹ Philo, *Virt.*, 216–7.

⁶² Lietzmann 12; Baumann, *Mitte*, 184–5; N. Hugedé, *La métaphore du miroir* (Neuchâtel: Delachaux & Niestlé, 1957) 177–82; Strobel 65; Fee 102; Lindemann 62, also references to Wis 6:15; 9:6, and Sir 34:8.

⁶³ Hamerton-Kelly, *Pre-existence*, 121, refers for σοφός and τέλειος to *Agr.* 99, *Her.* 21, *Deus* 3, *Migr.* 38; in *Leg.* 3, 140 Moses is called ὁ τέλειος σοφός; for αὐτομαθής καὶ αὐτοδίδακτος see *Fug.* 166, *Congr.* 111, *Opif.* 148; and for the metaphors of ruler and king, *Somn.* 2, 243–4, *Mut.* 152, *Post.* 138.

Corinth,⁶⁴ “all things are ours.” This saying was common in Stoic circles.⁶⁵ Yet after the words “whether the world or life or death or the present or the future – all belong to you (3:22),” follows the addition “and you belong to Christ, and Christ belongs to God,” which completely changes what first appeared to be a Stoic notion.⁶⁶ The comparable expression, probably attributed by Paul to the Corinthians, “we reign as kings” (4:8) is also in line with Stoic thought.⁶⁷ The Cynic-Stoic wise man considered himself king because he did not have to give account to anyone.⁶⁸

Body and mind

Philo interprets Abraham’s calling out of his country in Gen 12:1 as a call to depart from the body: “Depart, therefore, out of the earthly matter that encompasses thee; escape, man, from the foul prison house, thy body, with all thy might and main, and from the pleasures and lusts that act as it jailers.”⁶⁹ Philo interprets the land of Egypt as the domain of the body, which has to be left behind in a spiritual exodus.⁷⁰ There is evidence in the letter that the Corinthians were influenced by the general scheme of Platonic anthropological dualism which is also present in Philo and in the Wisdom of Solomon.⁷¹ They appear to have claimed “all things are permitted,” (cf. 6:12; 10:23)⁷² but also that “it is better for a man not to touch a woman” (7:1).⁷³ These seemingly contradictory statements bear witness to a disparagement of the body, which manifested itself on the one hand in libertinism and on the other in asceticism. In his anti-dualist response, Paul

⁶⁴ Fascher 144; Merklein 283.

⁶⁵ Weiss 90; Conzelmann 107; Thiselton 357; Schnabel 223–4; Lindemann 93 (e.g. τῶν σοφῶν δὲ πάντα εἶναι (Diog. Laërt. 7,125).

⁶⁶ J.N. Sevenster, *Paul and Seneca* (Leiden: Brill, 1961) 114, 119–20; Thiselton 328.

⁶⁷ Weiss 106–7; Conzelmann 114; Thiselton 357; Lindemann 104–5.

⁶⁸ Merklein 309; Lindemann 105. Cf also Wis 6:20 ἐπιθυμία σοφίας ἀνάγει ἐπὶ βασιλείαν.

⁶⁹ *Migr.* 9 (Colson and Whitaker, LCL).

⁷⁰ *Migr.* 14, cf. 20.

⁷¹ E.g. Wis 9:13: “A perishable body weighs down the soul and its frame of clay burdens the mind.”

⁷² Horsley, “Elitism,” 226, comments on this expression: “Stoic material is rich and seductive for an approach that looks only for parallel language. Such Stoic language, however, judging from Philo’s writings, had long since worked its way into Jewish Hellenistic religion. Thus in *Prob.*, Philo expounds at length on a favourite doctrine of the Stoics ‘that only the wise man is free’ (see esp. 21–22, 41, 59–61). Moreover, he produces an argument which is much closer in language to the Corinthians’ slogan of 6:12 and 10:23 than are any of the Stoic texts: ‘(The wise and good person) will have the power to do anything and to live as he wishes; the one for whom these things are possible must be free (ὁ δὲ ταῦτ’ ἔξεστιν· ἐλεύθερος ἂν εἴη)’ (*Prob.* 59).” Paul also considers himself free (9:1) but not like the Stoics: “Paul’s and Seneca’s views on freedom are divergent right from the start” (Sevenster, *Paul and Seneca*, 122).

⁷³ Most commentators attribute this statement to the Corinthians (Fee 252; Schnabel 351; Thiselton 498: “an increasing consensus inclines towards this view”).

rehabilitates in strong terms the life in the body as essential for Christian existence.⁷⁴ His teaching is φεύγετε τὴν πορνείαν (6:18) but not φεύγετε τὸ σῶμα. In Philo's spiritual itinerary, the journey starts in the land of the Body and has as its goal the land of the holy Word, "and that land is Wisdom (ἡ δ' ἐστὶ σοφία)."⁷⁵ Those who live in that land are self-taught (αὐτοδίδακτος) and have no share in the childish and milk-like food (τὸ νηπίας καὶ γαλακτώδους τροφῆς ἀμέτοχον, *Migr.* 29; cf. 1 Cor 3:1, 2).

Philo applies the promise of God's presence among his people in LXX Lev 26:12 καὶ ἐμπεριπατήσω ἐν ὑμῖν) to the mind (νοῦς) of the wise person: "This it is in which God, so says the prophet, "walks" as in a palace, for in truth the wise man's mind is a palace and house of God (βασίλειον καὶ οἶκος θεοῦ σοφοῦ διάνοια).⁷⁶ Paul, however, applies Lev 26:12 to the believing community in 2 Cor 6:16 and 1 Cor 3:16 (without referring to Scripture): ναὸς θεοῦ ἐστε καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ θεοῦ οἰκεῖ ἐν ὑμῖν. Furthermore, in 1 Cor 6:19 he does not say that the Spirit of God dwells in the mind but that he dwells in the *body* (τὸ σῶμα ὑμῶν ναὸς τοῦ ἐν ὑμῖν ἁγίου πνεύματος ἐστίν). To Philo a joining of the divine spirit with the human body would be completely unacceptable (even though occasionally he can be moderately positive about the body). The body is the part of man that is mortal and bound to perish.⁷⁷ Therefore, the wise person in this life already looks on his body as foreign and dead.⁷⁸ Philo agrees with the description of σῶμα as σῆμα, 'grave of the νοῦς' (*Spec.* IV 188) or as the oyster shell of the soul (*Virt.* 76).⁷⁹ Man is mortal κατὰ τὸ σῶμα and immortal κατὰ τὴν διάνοιαν. After death, in the παλιγγενεσία, man is no longer united with the σώματα but with the ἀσώματα.⁸⁰ This view of the body plays a role in the rejection of a bodily resurrection (cf. 1 Cor 15:12, 35; see the next section).

Eschatology

There has been much discussion about the eschatology of the Corinthians. 1 Cor 4:8 is the most explicit basis for the argument that the Corinthians held to or were strongly influenced by an 'overrealized' eschatology. The remarks ἤδη κεκορεσμένοι ἐστέ· ἤδη ἐπλουτήσατε· χωρὶς ἡμῶν ἐβασιλεύσατε· seems to support the idea that the Corinthians

⁷⁴ Οὐκ οἶδατε ὅτι τὰ σώματα ὑμῶν μέλη Χριστοῦ ἐστίν; (1 Cor 6:15); Δοξάσατε δὴ τὸν θεὸν ἐν τῷ σώματι ὑμῶν (6:20).

⁷⁵ *Migr.* 28 (Colson and Whitaker, LCL); cf. Sellin, *Auferstehung*, 137: "Die Jenseitsausrichtung des Weisen ist ein Sein in der 'Heimat' (*All.* 3:84: μετοικία; *Agr.* 65: πατρίς).

⁷⁶ Philo, *Praem.* 123 (Colson, LCL); cf. A. Wikenhauser, *Die Christismystik des Apostels Paulus* (Freiburg; Herder, 1956) 39-40.

⁷⁷ E. Schweizer, "σῶμα κτλ," *TWNT* 7: 1048-51.

⁷⁸ Schweizer, "σῶμα κτλ," 1051, with references to Philo's works.

⁷⁹ In Greek thought already at least half a century before Plato the body is understood as a part of man over against the soul (Schweizer, "σῶμα κτλ," 1027).

⁸⁰ "Während für Paulus Heil immer leiblich vorstellbar ist und Erlösung entsprechend als zweite Schöpfung verstanden wird, wird im ontologischen Denken Philos das Heil mit dem Sein an sich identifiziert – und dieses ist eo ipso unkörperlich, geistig, weil nur dort 'Einheit' möglich ist" (Sellin, *Auferstehung*, 133).

had an ‘overrealized eschatology’, viz. that in their experience and view of life all that pertains to the Eschaton had already become a reality.⁸¹ This interpretation of 4:8 has been supported with 15:12 which states that a bodily resurrection of believers was rejected by a part of the Corinthian church.⁸² The statements in 1 Cor 4:8 and 15:12 were subsequently interpreted in the light of 2 Tim 2:18, which speaks of teaching in the early church asserting that the resurrection had *already* taken place.⁸³ The connection between these verses was developed by J. Schniewind in an essay written in 1944/45 but published posthumously in 1952. Schniewind argued that it was only a small step from Paul’s own ἤδη – in e.g. Rom 13:11⁸⁴ – to a Gnostic ἤδη in 2 Tim 2:18.⁸⁵ Paul held the ‘now’⁸⁶ and the ‘not yet’⁸⁷ together in a balance, but the Corinthians were tempted to let the future collapse into the present. However, even though one may conjecture a form of Gnosticism in a later phase in the teachings of Hymenaeus and Philetus in 2 Tim 2:18, the theory of Gnosticism at an early stage in Corinth lacks evidence.

Instead of advocating ‘over-realized eschatology’ in Corinth, some take a non-eschatological view. They refer to the Greco-Roman culture and religion,⁸⁸ and observe that “most pagans sought not eternal life but present benefits from religion.”⁸⁹ It is probably true that a Platonic belief in the immortality of the soul was a rather sophisticated concept for the masses. Their ideas have been described by Plutarch as a mix of popular conceptions of Hades, traditional death cult, insecurity caused by the critics of religious mythology, fear and faint hopes of some kind of survival after death.⁹⁰ The

⁸¹ Thiselton 358: “ἤδη, ‘already’, is a clear signal of an overrealized eschatology, especially in conjunction with χωρὶς ἡμῶν.” See also by the same author, “Realized Eschatology at Corinth,” *NTS* 24 (1977/78) 510–26.

⁸² πῶς λέγουσιν ἐν ὑμῖν τινες ὅτι ἀνάστασις νεκρῶν οὐκ ἔστιν;

⁸³ λέγοντες [τὴν] ἀνάστασιν ἤδη γεγενῆσθαι. Thiselton, “Eschatology,” 523, rejects this particular argument for an overrealized eschatology: “It is difficult to imagine how after eighteen months of Paul’s teaching, the Corinthians seriously believed that they had already been raised from the dead and would never die.”

⁸⁴ ὥρα ἤδη ὑμᾶς ἐξ ὕπνου ἐγερθῆναι

⁸⁵ J. Schniewind, “Die Leugner der Auferstehung in Korinth,” in *Nachgelassene Reden und Aufsätze* (ed. E. Kähler; Berlin: Töpelmann, 1952) 110–139, 117.

⁸⁶ cf. 2 Cor 6:2 ἰδοὺ νῦν καιρὸς εὐπρόσδεκτος, ἰδοὺ νῦν ἡμέρα σωτηρίας.

⁸⁷ e.g. Phil 3:12 Οὐχ ὅτι ἤδη ἔλαβον ἢ ἤδη τετελείωμαι.

⁸⁸ Hays, “Conversion,” 396: “The Corinthians did not have an ‘overrealized eschatology’. Instead, they employed categories of self-understanding derived from a decidedly non-eschatological Greco-Roman cultural environment. Their particular form of ‘enthusiasm’ seems to have been a hybrid of Stoic and Cynic philosophical influences, popular sophistic rhetoric, and charismatic spiritual fervour.”

⁸⁹ Witherington 220; R. MacMullen, *Paganism in the Roman Empire* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981) 54: “It should really not be taken for granted, as is often assumed, that people who believe a god might rise from death also believed in such a blessing for themselves as well. The conjecture needs support – and finds none.”

⁹⁰ G. Barth, “Zur Frage der in 1 Korinther 15 bekämpften Auferstehungsleugnung,” *ZNW* 83 (1992) 200.

Corinthian' rejection of resurrection has also been linked with Stoicism in particular.⁹¹ Still others refer to Epicurian influence in Corinth, which made them hold that no part of man remained after death.⁹² Yet, both overrealized eschatology and the non-eschatological interpretation fail to do sufficient justice to the text of 1 Corinthians. The central issue is bodily existence in the life of the future.

Hellenistic-Jewish influence suggests that 'some' Corinthians while believing in some form of life after death, had difficulties with *somatic* life after death. This viewpoint is reflected in the Wisdom of Solomon, which supports a hope of immortality but does not clearly affirm a resurrection. In the Septuagint the Wisdom of Solomon and 4 Maccabees are the only books in which the terms ἀθανασία (Wis 3:4; 4:1; 8:13, 17; 15:3; 4 Macc 14:5; 16:13) and ἀφθαρσία (Wis 2:23; 6:18, 19; 4 Macc 9:22; 17:12) occur. The belief in a general resurrection belongs to a cosmological-apocalyptic eschatology and this type of eschatology was not at home in Hellenistic Judaism. In the context of the Roman Empire Philo reinterpreted Israel's politically sensitive messianic national expectations through spiritualization and this position may have been representative for Hellenistic Jews in the western Diaspora.⁹³ For Paul, however, a future general resurrection was the inevitable outcome of the resurrection of Jesus Christ (15:12-13, 21-22). The Corinthian opponents of Paul apparently saw Jesus' resurrection as a singular event – they seem to have accepted the *kerugma* in 15:4 – but Paul saw it as an eschatological universal event.⁹⁴ The death and the resurrection of Christ, as well as the coming of the Holy Spirit, were apocalyptic events, which make believers into people "on whom the ends of the ages have come" (1 Cor 10:11). Their life in the present is determined by the Christ-event of the past and by the future "revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ" (1:7). That Paul wanted to strengthen the Corinthians faith in God's future and correct misconceptions in this area is clear throughout 1 Cor 1-4 (1:7, 8; 3:13-15; 4:5). Their eschatological expectations were weakened or abandoned on account of external influences. These influences resemble Hellenistic-Jewish wisdom theology as represented by Philo.⁹⁵

⁹¹ A.V. Garsilazo, *The Corinthian Dissenters and the Stoics* (New York: Lang, 2007) 179-81, though to speak of 'realized' or 'overrealized eschatology' (181) is inappropriate in the case of Stoic cosmology.

⁹² Witherington 303.

⁹³ U. Fischer, *Eschatologie und Jenseitserwartung im Hellenistischen Diasporajudentum* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1978) 255-6.

⁹⁴ W. Grundmann, "Überlieferung und Eigenaussage im eschatologischen Denken des Apostels Paulus," *NTS* 8 (1962) 15.

⁹⁵ The position of the Corinthians as discussed above is well summarized by T. Söding: "Der Tod Jesu wird zwar nicht geleugnet (vgl. 15,3); aber er wird ästhetisiert: Das Kreuz ist das Symbol des Abschieds vom Vergänglichen und des Hinübergehens in die Sphäre des Pneuma. Ganz ähnlich begreifen die Pneumatiker ihren eigenen Tod: Er wird zwar kaum als Apotheose begriffen, wohl aber als *transitus*, als Befreiung der unsterblichen Seele aus dem Gefängnis des Leibes und als Ermöglichung der *visio beatifica*. Die Vorstellung einer Auferstehung der Toten wird abgelehnt, da sie immer nur als Auferstehung des Leibes und immer nur als universalgeschichtliches Ereignis am Ende des gegenwärtigen Äons gedacht werden kann. Der Neutralisierung des Todes entspricht die theologische Negation der Geschichte. Wie in Korinth die Identität Jesu Christi,

Revelation

Some have thought that the revealed wisdom Paul speaks of in 1 Cor 2:6–16 had come to him in a form of visionary–ecstatic experience in the Spirit, comparable with his report in 2 Cor 12:1–4,⁹⁶ and have sought parallels in the mystery–religions. According to Conzelmann the term τέλειοι (2:6) and the idea expressed in revelation by the Spirit (2:10) derive from mystery–language.⁹⁷ In Conzelmann’s perception the revelation Paul speaks of is no longer rational – not in a Greek nor in a Jewish sense – but is received through supernatural enlightenment as in Philo where in the revelatory experience the πνεῦμα drives away the νοῦς.⁹⁸

Indeed, Philo interprets the setting of the sun in LXX Gen 15:12⁹⁹ as the absence of the mind in regular¹⁰⁰ prophetic experience: “When it (the mind, νοῦς) comes to its setting, naturally ecstasy and divine possession and madness fall upon us. For when the light of God shines, the human light sets ... The mind is evicted at the arrival of the divine Spirit.”¹⁰¹ For both Paul and Philo the divine Spirit is indispensable but Philo also emphasizes the need for enlightenment. Sellin summarizes: “Only he that is enlightened, can be wise.”¹⁰² The wise man is one who sees.¹⁰³ Philo consistently ranges sight above hearing. He refers to LXX Ex 20:18, πᾶς ὁ λαὸς ἑώρα τὴν φωνήν, to support his conviction “that the words of God are seen as light is seen.”¹⁰⁴ “The words of God are interpreted by the power of sight residing in the soul,”¹⁰⁵ while human words are heard

vorbei an seiner Erniedrigung, undialektisch nur in seiner Erhöhung gesucht wird, so wird die Identität der Christen, vorbei an ihren geschichtlichen Lebensvollzügen, ebenso undialektisch allein in jener Gottinnerlichkeit festgemacht, die scheinbar vom Pneuma konstituiert wird. Indem aber der eschatologische Vorbehalt ausser Kraft gesetzt wird und die eschatologische Hoffnung zum Versprechen individueller Unsterblichkeit degeneriert, gerät die Geschichte als Ort des Handelns Gottes wie als Zeitraum menschlichen Lebens, gerät zugleich die Sozialität und Kommunikativität als wesensmerkmal der Menschen aus dem Blick” (“Hoffnung für Lebende und Tote. Perspektiven paulinischer Eschatologie,” in T. Söding, *Das Wort vom Kreuz* [Tübingen: Mohr, 1997] 63).

⁹⁶ Bousset 73.

⁹⁷ Conzelmann 83–4.

⁹⁸ Conzelmann 90.

⁹⁹ Περὶ δὲ ἡλίου δυσμὰς ἑκστασις ἐπέπεσεν τῷ Ἀβραμ, καὶ ἰδοὺ φόβος σκοτεινὸς μέγας ἐπιπίπτει αὐτῷ.

¹⁰⁰ Τῷ δὲ προφητικῷ γένει φιλεῖ τοῦτο συμβαίνειν (Philo, *Her.* 265, cf. 249)

¹⁰¹ Ἐξοικίζεται ἐν ἡμῖν ὁ νοῦς κατὰ τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ πνεύματος ἀφίξιν (*Her.* 265 [Colson and Whitaker, LCL]).

¹⁰² Sellin, *Auferstehung*, 147, referring to *Leg.* 3:7; *Imm.* 2f.; *Migr.* 35, 76; *Congr.* 47; *Praem.* 25, 37ff.; *Abr.* 119–123) and adding that Sophia is the source of this light according to *Spec.* 1:287; 3:6.

¹⁰³ *Migr.* 38: ὁ δὲ ὁρῶν ἐστὶν ὁ σοφός.

¹⁰⁴ *Migr.* 47 (LCL). MT Ex 20:18 has אֶת־הַקּוֹלֹת רָאִים כָּל־הָעָם referring to peals of thunder. This is rendered καὶ πᾶς ὁ λαὸς ἑώρα τὴν φωνήν in LXX Ex 20:18, probably encouraged by MT Ex 20:22: “You have seen for yourselves that I spoke with you from heaven.”

¹⁰⁵ Οἱ τοῦ θεοῦ λόγοι ὅρασιν ἔχουσιν τὴν ἐν ψυχῇ κριτήριον (*Migr.* 49).

with the ear. We recognize the same stress on seeing and hearing in 1 Cor 1-4: “that which eye has not seen and ear has not heard” (2:9), referring to God’s hidden wisdom recently revealed.

In contrast with Philo, for Paul revelation by the Spirit does not exclude the active participation of the mind. He speaks of the revelatory experience as a receiving of the Spirit of God (ἐλάβομεν τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ, 2:12) within the ordinary existence of the believer. Paul sees the life that shares in knowledge of the hidden wisdom of God as a permanent participation (presens ἔχομεν) in “the mind of Christ,” (2:16). He does not consider the human mind and the divine Spirit as mutually exclusive: on the contrary, revelation engages the human understanding.¹⁰⁶ Through the Spirit “we come to *know*” (2:12) and the Spirit *teaches* (2:13). Starting from the givens of revelation and the new life from the Spirit “Paul allots to reason and to the rationality of man an exceedingly important role for the self-understanding of the Christian and for all areas of his life.”¹⁰⁷

For Paul the means and the object of this knowledge are not the same. It is not a knowledge of the Spirit or of God but of τὰ ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ χαρισθέντα ἡμῖν (2:12, cf. ἃ ἡτοίμασεν ὁ θεὸς τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτόν, 2:9).¹⁰⁸ Here also Paul differs from the mystical tradition of which Philo is an interesting and ambiguous example. In his writings the latter has incorporated mystical traditions which present salvation through “consubstantiality between the divine being and the human soul,” while traces of the Biblical discontinuity between the human and the divine remain.¹⁰⁹ Philo can say that the divine Spirit dwells in the mind of the wise (*Praem.* 123) but in a mystical vein he says that salvation consists in “an ascent of the divine in man to its source in God.”¹¹⁰ It seems likely that some of the Corinthians held a view similar to the mystical tradition in Philo and denied “the ontological gap between man and God.”¹¹¹ Pneumatic existence was for them “an ontological possibility,” in fact “a constituent element of human nature.”¹¹² Paul

¹⁰⁶ Paul also emphasizes the importance of the mind in relation to revelation in chapter 14: he prefers to speak in church five words with his mind, so that others may learn from it, rather than ten thousand words in a tongue (γλώσση, 14:19). While the Corinthians highly favored tongue-speaking, the apostle puts a high premium on intelligibility; he wants to be understood as speaker. This has repercussions for his letter writing as well. His phrase οὐκ ἐν σοφίᾳ λόγου (1:17) does not mean poorly expressed or badly conceptualized.

¹⁰⁷ G. Bornkamm, “Faith and reason in Paul,” in *Early Christian Experience* (New York: Harper & Row, 1969) 35; For Paul reason is unable to find God but once God has made himself known reason is of great value in understanding the Scriptures and exploring Christian existence.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. Lührmann, *Offenbarungsverständnis*, 134.

¹⁰⁹ Hamerton-Kelly, *Pre-Existence*, 121.

¹¹⁰ Hamerton-Kelly, *Pre-Existence*, 121.

¹¹¹ Hamerton-Kelly, *Pre-Existence*, 122-3; cf. B. Gärtner, “The Pauline and Johannine Idea of ‘To Know God’ against the Hellenistic Background. The Greek philosophical Principle ‘Like by Like’ in Paul and John, *NTS* 14 (1967/68) 209-31, 217: “It is very reasonable to assume that Paul’s opponents in Corinth were theologians who in their theological system(s) had made use of the principle ‘like by like’, as so many others had done in the Hellenistic world, asserting that there must be a kinship between God’s wisdom, the *Pneuma* they had received as Christians, and their own natural mind, their own *pneuma*.”

¹¹² Sterling, *Wisdom*, 372.

takes up here¹¹³ the principle ‘like by like’, in the sense that only God can reveal God but he does not support the idea of consubstantiality.¹¹⁴ The gap between God and man can not be bridged ontologically but only epistemologically through revelation. Paul emphasizes the human inability to gain access to the wisdom of God (1 Cor 2:6-9). “The question about the *possibility* of a reasoned knowledge of God is not an open question for him at all.”¹¹⁵ The only possibility for man to receive this knowledge is through the revealing activity of Gods Spirit (2:10). But this Spirit remains distinct from man’s own spirit (2:11-12). The preposition ἐκ in the phrase τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ (2:12) maintains the sovereignty of God in the area of revelation.¹¹⁶

Surprisingly Theissen attributes to Paul the very mystical position the apostle appears to be refuting. According to Theissen for Paul salvation consists in the expansion of consciousness beyond human limitations. Man receives a share in the inner life of God by means of the Spirit of God.¹¹⁷ This interpretation of revelation in Pauline pneumatology is related to the 19th century Idealist exegesis of 1 Cor 2:6-16 which, according to Käsemann misinterpreted Paul’s conception of the Spirit as self-consciousness, erasing the difference between the human and the divine.¹¹⁸

¹¹³ Only evident in this place in the case of Paul; the idea is common in John (Gärtner, “Like by Like,” 215).

¹¹⁴ The combination of ‘like by like’ and consubstantiality is found in Philo: “Unter den Menschen kann nur *der* Gottes Existenz *in der rechten Weise* erkennen, dessen νοῦς (als Erkenntnisorgan) Gott seinem eigenen νοῦς, dem göttlichen Logos, angleicht.” (G. Sellin, “Gotteserkenntnis und Gotteserfahrung bei Philo von Alexandrien,” in *Monotheismus und Christologie* [ed. H.-J. Klauck; Freiburg: Herder, 1992] 17-40, 24. The principle expressed in Philo’s own words: “The seekers for truth are those who envisage God through God, light through light.” (*Pream.* 46, Colson LCL)

¹¹⁵ Bornkamm, “Faith and Reason,” 33, referring to Rom 1 and 1 Cor 1 (cursive his). Bornkamm continues as follows: “When one considers what place such reflections already occupy in Stoic theology, in Philo, in the *Corpus Hermeticum* and later Christian apologetics, and what lofty titles they attach to the ‘mind’ or to the ‘reason’ of man in the context of a rational or mystic-gnostic anthropology, then one first notices the peculiarity of Pauline thinking and speaking.”

¹¹⁶ Lührmann, *Offenbarungsverständnis*, 135, also n.4: “Zu beachten ist ferner, dass es in 1 Kor.2:10a nicht ἐν πνεύματι (so Eph.3:5), sondern διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος heisst.”

¹¹⁷ G. Theissen, “Weisheit für Vollkommene als höheres Bewusstsein (1.Kor 2,6-16),” in Idem, *Psychologische Aspekte paulinischer Theologie* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1983) 341-94, 363; Theissen’s idea of the expansion of human consciousness in Paul is based on two unfounded assumptions: 1) according to 2:11 a man’s spirit is able to open itself to God’s Spirit and 2) God’s Spirit transmits God himself because “the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God” (2:10). W. Pannenberg likewise rejects a fundamental separation of the human and the divine spirit. In his view the human person participates in the divine Spirit through self-transcendence, when his creatureliness is lifted above itself in the ecstatic experience (“Ekstatische Selbstüberschreitung als Teilhabe am göttlichen Geist,” in *Erfahrung und Theologie des Heiligen Geistes* [ed. C. Heitman and H. Mühlen; München: Kösel, 1974] 176-91, 183. However, ‘expansion of consciousness’ and ‘self-transcendence through ecstatic experience’ appear to be the false ideas of the *Corinthians* in the eyes of Paul.

¹¹⁸ Käsemann, “1 Korinther 2,6-16,” 270.

The same is true for Philo: “Wise men take God for their guide and teacher, but the less perfect take the wise man, and therefore they say: ‘You speak to us, but let not God speak to us, lest we die’ (Ex 20:19).”¹¹⁹ Philo distinguishes between ‘sons of God’, who are directly under God on the level of the Logos and ‘sons of the Logos’ who are on a lower level.¹²⁰ He further explains this distinction as one between ‘Israel’ and ‘the sons of Israel’, that is between ‘the one who sees’ and ‘those who hear’.¹²¹ Philo likes to point to the text that says “in former times they called the prophets seers.”¹²² Those who hear depend on the one who sees. This leads to a two-level view of revelation. For Philo the perfection of Moses is out of reach for ordinary humans, who are by design imperfect. They have to follow one of the paths of the three patriarchs, who each in his own way, sought for perfection.¹²³ It is quite likely that in saying “we speak wisdom among the perfect,” Paul refers to a desire or status claimed by some of the Corinthians.

3. Wisdom in Contemporaneous Jewish Literature

In the preceding part of this chapter we looked at the religious-cultural context of the Corinthian views on wisdom. There are many indications that the Corinthians were influenced by a Hellenistic-Jewish environment. The conflict on wisdom in 1 Cor 1–4 results from the fact that the author resists the views his readers have. He seeks to correct them by returning to crucified Lord and resorts to his own sources to explain God’s wisdom. The leading question in this last chapter is: do his ideas agree with other Jewish writings? We will consider Baruch and Sirach with their focus on the relationship of wisdom with covenant law, 4 Maccabees and Wisdom of Solomon with its Stoic affinities with regard to wisdom, and Daniel and the Dead Sea Scrolls with their emphasis on ‘mystery,’ revelation and knowledge.

Baruch and Sirach

E. Peterson drew attention to the similarities between 1 Cor 1:18–31 and Bar 3:9–4:4 and proposed that these were the result of a common homiletical-liturgical situation,¹²⁴ but not of literary borrowing of one from the other. H. Hübner, however, considers the book

¹¹⁹ *Her.* 19.

¹²⁰ *Conf.* 147 (Colson and Whitaker, LCL): “If we have not yet become fit to be thought sons of God yet we may be sons of his invisible image, the most holy Word. For the Word is the eldest-born image of God.”

¹²¹ *Conf.* 148 (Colson and Whitaker, LCL) continues with: “since hearing stands second in estimation and below sight, and the recipient of teaching is always second to him with whom realities present their forms clear to his vision and not through the medium of instruction.”

¹²² *Migr.* 38; *Her.* 78; *Deus* 139. The text is 1 Kgdms 9:9 τὸν προφήτην ἐκάλει ὁ λαὸς ἔμπροσθεν Ὁ βλέπων.

¹²³ M.L. Satlow, “Philo on Human Perfection,” *JTSNS* 59 (2008) 500–19, 501.

¹²⁴ In particular the Day of Atonement on which was also read Jer 8:13–9:24 (cf. 1 Cor 1:31). See E. Peterson, “1 Kor 1,18f. und die Thematik des jüdischen Busstages,” *Bib* 32 (1951) 97–103, 100.

of Baruch to be an important source for 1 Cor 1:18–31. He compares especially the following verses: Bar 3:28 (ἀπώλοντο) with 1 Cor 1:18 and Bar 3:26–27 with 1 Cor 1:27–28.¹²⁵ Hübner argues that Paul has taken ἐξελέξατο ὁ θεός from Bar 3:27 because 1 Cor 1 and Bar 3 do not only have a common language but also share the same theological structure. In Hübner’s view, Paul gives Baruch’s structure a “kreuzestheologische Zuspitzung.”¹²⁶ However, the structure consisting of a) the question where wisdom can be found followed by b) the response that no human effort is able to find her, and c) the disclosure that wisdom is God’s possession, is not unique for Baruch but has deeper roots in the Old Testament. The question: “Has any man discovered the dwelling-place of wisdom and entered her storehouse?” (Bar 3:15 NEB) draws on Job 28:12, 20. The answer in Bar 3:31–32: “No one can know the path or conceive the way that will lead to her. Only the One who knows all things knows her: his understanding discovered her (NEB)” echoes Job 28:23, where it says: “God understands the way to it, and he knows its place.”¹²⁷ Instead of speaking of Paul borrowing from Baruch, there is more reason to see in Baruch and Paul parallel but different developments from older sources. The expression ‘God chose’ in Baruch 3 and 1 Cor 1 derives from the OT election tradition.¹²⁸

With regard to the question where wisdom is found 1 Cor 1–4 differs significantly from Baruch 3:9–4:4. In 1 Corinthians God’s wisdom is revealed as (1:24) and in (1:30) Jesus Christ, while in Baruch (4:1, cf. 3:12) wisdom is embodied in Israel’s law. The same correlation¹²⁹ of wisdom and Israel’s covenant law presents itself in the book of Sirach (Sir 24:23). According to its author wisdom first dwelt in the heavens; when it sought for a home among the peoples of the earth, the Creator sent her to the city he loved: Jerusalem (Sir 24:1–12). It seems that Sirach and Baruch associate the Greek desire for wisdom with the quest for God’s wisdom in the Jewish scriptures (Job 28) and see this quest solved with the revelation of the covenant-law. The book of Deuteronomy already provides the link between wisdom and law (4:6–8, cf. Ps 119:97–100). This law is not hidden in heaven or far removed across the sea, but “very near to you; it is in your mouth and in your heart

¹²⁵ Hübner, *Vetus Testamentum*, 224, 230.

¹²⁶ Hübner, *Biblische Theologie*, Bd. 2, 116.

¹²⁷ Cf. for more correspondences with Job 28: M. Küchler, *Frühjüdische Weisheitstraditionen* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1979) 49–50; Cf. also Prov 8:22–31, 30:2–4; Job 38; W. Harrelson, “Wisdom Hidden and Revealed according to Baruch (Baruch 3,9–4,4)” in *Priests, Prophets and Scribes* (ed. E. Ulrich; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992) 158–71: “There can be doubt that, as scholars have long noted, Baruch’s poem on wisdom is heavily dependent for its thought upon earlier writers and thinkers” (158–9).

¹²⁸ See Chapter 9.2.1.

¹²⁹ Küchler, *Weisheitstraditionen*, 40 speaks of ‘strikte Gleichsetzung.’ It is true that the sentences beginning with the demonstrative pronouns ταῦτα (Sir 24:23) and αὕτη (Bar 4:1) have the form of an ‘Identifikationsformel.’ Yet we are not dealing with straightforward descriptive language and the context does not call for a simple identification or equality between wisdom and law, but for a close reciprocal relationship. “Parlons plutôt en termes de corrélation, voire d’une relative assimilation, car la distance entre les deux doit être respectée, même si la sagesse paraît parfois comme s’épuiser dans la Loi” (C. Perrot, “Les Sages et la Sagesse dans le Judaïsme Ancien,” in *La Sagesse Biblique. De l’Ancien au Nouveau Testament* [ed. J. Trublet; Paris: Cerf, 1995] 231–62, 248).

for you to observe” (Deut 30:11–14). Sirach declares that the much desired wisdom in the Hellenistic world is disclosed in Israel’s law.¹³⁰

Sirach employs the verb *καυχάομαι* frequently, e.g. in relation to clothing, one’s son, the law, and deeds (11:4; 30:2; 39:8; 48:4) but what is more important *wisdom* is allowed to boast before God (24:2). Famous men were a boast (*καύχημα*) in their time (Sir 44:7). In relation to this penchant for boasting, the presentation of Israel’s history in Sir 44–50 differs from the older historical biblical traditions. The latter are concerned with God’s work in the human past, often in a silent and unobtrusive way,¹³¹ but Sirach can be seen as a witness to the Jewish–Hellenistic tradition that encouraged the Corinthians in their love of wisdom and boasting.

4 Maccabees

A. Deissman thought of 4 Maccabees as a best-seller in the time of Paul, so that the apostle also would have been acquainted with it.¹³² Even though this estimation is probably unjustified, we do include a short discussion of 4 Maccabees because the book throws light on a current concept of wisdom and on the Jewish willingness to undergo sufferings.¹³³ The former may contribute to our understanding of the wisdom of the Corinthians. The latter helps us see that Paul’s attitude towards suffering is enigmatic in a Hellenistic–Jewish context.¹³⁴ From a rhetorical perspective 1 Corinthians is a deliberative speech, but the book of 4 Maccabees has many features of an epideictic speech, a discourse of praise on the Maccabean martyrs.¹³⁵ Eleazar, the seven brothers and their mother are presented as heroes of Israel’s faith. Yet the book is not only meant to give the reader a sense of awe and a high esteem for the martyrs. It also calls on the readers to emulate them, to follow their example of courage and faithfulness to the paternal religion.

The book marries philosophy with religion, exemplified by the expression *ὁ εὐσεβῆς λογισμός* (1:1). The religion intended is life according to God’s law. The philosophy held to is the self-mastery of reason (*λογισμός*) over the passions (*πάθοι*).¹³⁶ 4 Macc 1:30 says that reason (*λογισμός*) is the guide (*ἡγεμών*, cf. 2:22; 7:16) of the virtues

¹³⁰ Sirach is a Jewish answer to the Hellenistic desire for wisdom and the book says that “für Israel ist die Weisheit, mit alles was darunter verstanden werden kann (23:24 ταῦτα πάντα) am sichersten und besten greifbar in der Torah” (J. Marböck, *Weisheit im Wandel, Untersuchungen zur Weisheitstheologie bei Ben Sira* (Bonn: Hanstein, 1971; repr., Berlin: De Gruyter, 1999) 94.

¹³¹ Cf. the histories in Genesis, Samuel, Ruth, and Esther, stories without heroes, but with men and women whose lives are highly significant because of a hidden God behind the scenes. These presentations of human reality prefigure something of the weakness of the cross.

¹³² OTP 2, 540

¹³³ Also of interest for 1 Corinthians: “(the author’s) espousal of the Greek doctrine of the immortality of the soul is clear-cut and striking; he consistently omits the passages in his primary source, 2 Maccabees, that testify unreservedly to the Jewish belief in the resurrection of the body (7:9, 11, 14, 22f.)” (OTP 2, 539).

¹³⁴ See Chapter 11.1.4

¹³⁵ Cf. LXX-D, 730.

¹³⁶ The Stoic term *πάθος* occurs of the 64 places in the LXX, 62 times in 4 Maccabees; the term *λογισμός* appears in 75 verses of 4 Maccabees and 115 in all in the Septuagint (HR; LEH).

and the sovereign (αὐτοκράτωρ)¹³⁷ of the passions. The author defines his central concepts in 1:15–19:¹³⁸

(15) Reason is the mind that decides with sound judgment for the life of wisdom (λογισμὸς μὲν δὴ τοίνυν ἐστὶν νοῦς μετὰ ὀρθοῦ λόγου προτιμῶν τὸν σοφίας βίον).

(16) Wisdom is the knowledge of divine and human matters and their causes (σοφία δὴ τοίνυν ἐστὶν γνῶσις θείων καὶ ἀνθρωπίνων πραγμάτων καὶ τῶν τούτων αἰτιῶν). (17) This is the education in the law, through which we learn the divine things with reverence and human things to our profit.

(αὕτη δὴ τοίνυν ἐστὶν ἡ τοῦ νόμου παιδεία, δι' ἧς τὰ θεῖα σεμνῶς καὶ τὰ ἀνθρώπινα συμφερόντως μανθάνομεν).

(18) The kinds of wisdom are prudence, justice, courage and self-control (τῆς δὲ σοφίας ἰδέαι καθεστήκασιν φρόνησις καὶ δικαιοσύνη καὶ ἀνδρεία καὶ σωφροσύνη)¹³⁹

(19) Supreme over all is prudence, by which reason controls the passions (κυριωτάτη δὲ πάντων ἡ φρόνησις, ἐξ ἧς δὴ τῶν παθῶν ὁ λογισμὸς ἐπικρατεῖ).

The Stoic sources are quite evident in the definition of wisdom in 1:16 and the list of virtues in 1:19. Wisdom is accorded the highest authority, when it is said to contain the knowledge of divine and human things (1:16), and when it is equated – if we take αὕτη to refer to σοφία – with the education in the law. Nevertheless, outside the verses 1:15, 16, 18 σοφία is not spoken of in the book and it seems that the term σοφία and the particular concept of wisdom in 1:16 lack integration. The theme of the book is as the author announces at the beginning, the rule of reason over the passions. His φιλοσοφώτατος λόγος (the opening words) is a matter of practical philosophy and not of the speculative kind. For that we will turn to Wisdom of Solomon.

Wisdom of Solomon

According to NA²⁷ a parallel or similar expression of wisdom in 1 Cor 1:24 is found in Wis 7:24–25. A reason for assuming an allusion to Wis 7:24 would be that in 1 Cor 1:24 σοφία seems to have the same hypostatic quality as it has in Wis 7:22–24.¹⁴⁰ Yet, commentators who express themselves on the subject agree that σοφία is not meant as a hypostasis or a personification in 1 Cor 1:24.¹⁴¹ A look at Wis 7:24–25 in its context will shed some light on its understanding of wisdom:

¹³⁷ The term occurs within the LXX only in 4 Maccabees (1:7, 13, 30; 8:28; 16:1).

¹³⁸ Translation my own.

¹³⁹ Cf. the same kind of enumeration but different orientation in 1 Cor 1:30: Jesus Christ, ὃς ἐγενήθη σοφία ἡμῖν ἀπὸ θεοῦ, δικαιοσύνη τε καὶ ἁγιασμὸς καὶ ἀπολύτρωσις.

¹⁴⁰ With hypostasis we refer to an attribute of God which has become an independent reality, while a personification is the rhetorical presentation of wisdom as an active and speaking personality (Von Lips, *Traditionen*, 154–55).

¹⁴¹ Conzelmann 68; Schrage 188; Lindemann 47; Fee 77, and Fee, “Wisdom Christology in Paul,” in *The Way of Wisdom* (ed. J.I. Packer and S.K. Soderlund; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000)

(22) There is in her (wisdom) a spirit that is intelligent (νοερόν), holy, unique, manifold, subtle, mobile, clear, unpolluted, distinct, invulnerable, loving the good, keen, irresistible, (23) beneficent, humane, steadfast, sure, free from anxiety, all-powerful, overseeing all, and penetrating through all spirits that are intelligent, pure, and altogether subtle. (24) For wisdom is more mobile than any motion; because of her pureness she pervades and penetrates all things (διήκει δὲ καὶ χωρεῖ διὰ πάντων). (25) For she is a breath of the power of God and a pure emanation (ἀπόρροια) of the glory of the Almighty.

The long list of wisdom's qualities in verses 22–23 reflects Stoic thinking. The text says first that an intelligent spirit (πνεῦμα) inhabits wisdom (22), then that wisdom itself is a breath (ἀτμός) that pervades all things (24–25). Interestingly, Wisdom of Solomon here applies the theological language of Platonizing Stoicism not to God but to wisdom.¹⁴² The transcendent God of biblical tradition remains outside the discussion while wisdom is elevated to the position of a spiritual force within the universe. Furthermore, five other attributes¹⁴³ mentioned here are not found elsewhere in the LXX and belong to Hellenistic philosophical language.¹⁴⁴ Wisdom of Solomon expresses wisdom in the popular philosophical language of his day in order to propagate Israel's wisdom in a Hellenistic environment.¹⁴⁵ The book also uses many Hellenistic religious terms, for example, wisdom is an initiate (μύστις) in the knowledge of God (8:4).¹⁴⁶ All this indicates that wisdom in 1 Cor 1:24 and wisdom in Wis 7:24–25 belong to different religious spheres.

The thoughts of the Corinthians on wisdom are probably a development of reflections as we find them in the Wisdom of Solomon. Paul deals with the concept of wisdom because it probably was a matter of great interest for the Corinthians. Because they clung to a concept of wisdom which was at odds with his gospel, Paul does not answer them with describing the gospel in terms of wisdom but in terms of power (1:18).

251–79, 256: “Paul’s assertion of Christ as ‘God’s power’ and ‘God’s wisdom’ in 1:24 (note Paul’s order) is not a christological pronouncement at all, as though Paul were reflecting either a Dynamis or Sophia Christology. Rather, he is taking the *Corinthians*’ word, however they understood it, and demythologizing it by anchoring it firmly in history – in a crucified Messiah ...” The expressions have a functional and not an ontological character, as Von Lips formulates: “Die positive Kennzeichnung Christi als Weisheit und Kraft Gottes beinhaltet das Verständnis Christi als wesentliches Welt- und Menschen-zugewandtes Wirken Gottes” (*Traditionen*, 349, cf. 332). Likewise, according to Weiss 33–4, the two expressions mean that God’s action in the cross was not a defeat “sondern einen Machterweis; keine Narrheit, sondern Beweis das Gott weise ist.”

¹⁴² E.g. Aetius 1.7.33 (*SVF* 2.1027): “The Stoics made god out to be intelligent (νοερόν) ... and a spirit pervading the whole world (καὶ πνεῦμα μὲν ἐνδιήκον δι’ ὅλου τοῦ κόσμου).”

¹⁴³ ἀκώλυτος, εὐεργετικός, εὐκίνητος, πολυμερής, and φιλόγαθος.

¹⁴⁴ J.M. Reese, *Hellenistic Influence on the Book of Wisdom and its Consequences* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1970) 13–4.

¹⁴⁵ J. Fichtner *Weisheit Salomos* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1938) 29, 31.

¹⁴⁶ Cf. Reese, *Influence*, 6–12 for Wisdom’s Hellenistic religious vocabulary.

Only after suspending the prevailing concept of wisdom by positing the message of the cross, the apostle is willing in 1:24 to speak of his message in terms of wisdom and develops the idea in 2:6-16.

The refusal of σοφία λόγου (1 Cor 1:17) may be a refusal of a wisdom adorned by language, a wisdom held in high esteem and presented as such. The 21 attributes of wisdom listed in Wis 7:22-23 are an example of such a praise of wisdom. When Paul lists qualities he does not ascribe them to wisdom but to love, and he presents them not in the form of verbs, indicating practical behavior (1 Cor 13:4-7). That some persons in Corinth confidently asserted themselves as wise persons (cf. 1 Cor 3:18) is in line with the ideal sketched in Wis 7:27, "in every generation (wisdom) passes into holy souls (ψυχάς) and makes them friends of God and prophets." The next verse says that those who share their lives with wisdom are truly loved by God.¹⁴⁷ Paul, however, does not regard the high premium the Corinthians set on wisdom as an advantage but as a barrier.

First Corinthians does not share with Wisdom of Solomon the hypostatic and Stoic qualities of wisdom but there is more agreement between the two writings in the close relationship they affirm between wisdom and history. Wisdom of Solomon sees wisdom as a separate gift to men – in the first place to Solomon – and as an active force in history. Wisdom and Israel's salvation history involve each other in a way not encountered before in the wisdom literature of the Old Testament. In this respect Wis 9 shows common ground with 1 Cor 1-2. Notable is also its interest in the revelation of wisdom.

13 For who can learn the counsel of God?
Or who can discern what the Lord wills?
14 For the reasoning of mortals is worthless,
and our designs are likely to fail;
15 for a perishable body weighs down the soul,
and this earthly tent burdens the thoughtful mind.
16 We can hardly guess at what is on earth,
and what is at hand we find with labour;
but who has traced out what is in the heavens?
17 Who has learnt your counsel,
unless you have given wisdom
and sent your holy spirit from on high?
18 And thus the paths of those on earth were set right,
and people were taught what pleases you,
and were saved (ἐσώθησαν) by wisdom (Wis 9:13-17).

This passage shares with 1 Cor 2:6-10 three important notions: 1) wisdom is closely associated with God's hidden plan (βουλή in Wis 9:13,17a, cf. 1 Cor 2:6-9), 2) wisdom is transmitted by God's holy spirit (Wis 9:17b and 1 Cor 2:10), and 3) wisdom is a means of salvation (Wis 9:18c and 1 Cor 1:18, 21). That the Corinthian church was probably

¹⁴⁷ Οὐθὲν γὰρ ἀγαπᾷ ὁ θεὸς εἰ μὴ τὸν σοφίᾳ συνοικοῦντα (Wis 7:28).

enamoured by a type of Jewish-Hellenistic wisdom already reflected in the Wisdom of Solomon, encourages us to think that these three notions about wisdom were shared by Paul and the Corinthians. The Wisdom of Solomon helps us to sketch some of the common ground between the author and the audience of 1 Cor 1–4. Ad 1) Even though Paul does not speak of ‘God’s plan,’ it is sufficiently evident that wisdom has this connotation in 1 Cor 1–4. Ad 2) Paul also agrees on the role of the Holy Spirit in revelation. Ad 3) Paul also interprets wisdom in the context of salvation.

Yet there are also differences: 1) In Wisdom of Solomon the divine spirit has a universal character (Wis 1:7), having “filled the world” (πνεῦμα κυρίου πεπλήρωκεν τὴν οἰκουμένην) as “that which holds all things together” (τὸ συνέχον τὰ πάντα). Paul, however, links the divine spirit specifically to the community of believers (e.g. 1 Cor 2:10, cf. 12:7) and distinguishes the Spirit from the world by saying that we have not received the spirit of the world (2:12). 2) He places the soteriological meaning of wisdom exclusively in Jesus, the crucified Messiah. 3) For Paul the body is not a barrier to wisdom as seen in Wis 9:15.

Daniel and Qumran

Wisdom of Solomon and Apocalyptic writings have in common that they speak of a transcendental wisdom, which is revealed to the elect.¹⁴⁸ Yet the circle of those who have knowledge of this secret wisdom is much more restricted in Apocalyptic writings than in Sirach, Baruch, and Wisdom of Solomon. In the latter writings it is given to the Jewish people. In 1 Enoch it is only the apocalyptic seer who is allowed to have a glimpse of the hidden purposes of God: “for I do know the mysteries of the holy ones; for he, the Lord, has revealed (them) to me and made me know – and I have read (them) in the heavenly tablets” (1 En 106:19, cf. chapters 14, 39–41). The mysteries have to remain hidden but Enoch is allowed to reveal these things secretly to his son (107:3).¹⁴⁹ In 4 Ezra the priest-scribe is inspired to dictate 24 books of Scripture for publication but 70 (esoteric, apocalyptic)¹⁵⁰ books have to be kept secret. They are preserved “in order to give them to the wise among your people, for in them is the spring of understanding, the fountain of wisdom, and the river of knowledge” (4 Ezra 14:46–47, cf. 14:26, 2 Bar 48:3).

The same pattern is present in the book of Daniel. Daniel has to keep the vision secret because it is meant for a later time (8:26) and the book remains sealed until the time of the end (12:4, 9). ‘The teachers’ or ‘the wise’ will then understand what Daniel is not yet able to understand, (דַּנְיֵאל הַמְּשַׁכֵּלִים; Theod: οἱ νοήμονες συνήσουσιν). This pattern is characteristic for early Jewish apocalyptic: the seer receives visions in a veiled manner and as an anticipation of a final revelation.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁸ M. Wolter, “Verborgene Weisheit und Heil für die Heiden. Zur Traditionsgeschichte und Intention des ‘Revelationsschemas’,” *ZTK* 84 (1987) 300–3.

¹⁴⁹ In the Greek version of the Chester Beatty papyrus: μυστηριακῶς ἐδήλωσεν αὐτῷ.

¹⁵⁰ OTP 1, 555.

¹⁵¹ M. Bockmuehl, *Revelation and Mystery in Ancient Judaism and Pauline Christianity* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1990) 39–40 calls it an “apocalyptic preview of the saints”; Luhrmann, *Offenbarungsverständnis*, 98–104; Baumann, *Mitte*, 178: “Das wissen des Sehers um eine obere

The book of Daniel contains in a paradigmatic way the use of μυστήριον as eschatological secret, revealed in the form of a veiled announcement of divinely ordained future events.¹⁵² God is called ὁ ἀνακαλύπτων (LXX; Theod.: ἀποκαλύπτων) μυστήρια (Dan 2:28, 29, 47). In 1 Cor 1–4 we also encounter the terms ἀποκαλύπτω (2:10) and μυστήριον. The text speaks of μυστήριον in 2:1,¹⁵³ in 2:7 also in the singular, and 4:1 in the plural. The manner in which μυστήριον functions in 2:7 (θεοῦ σοφίαν ἐν μυστηρίῳ, τὴν ἀποκεκρυμμένην) betrays an affinity with Jewish-apocalyptic concepts and a distance from mystery-cults and Gnosis.¹⁵⁴ The book of Daniel shares with Qumran the understanding of רִז (μυστήριον) as the secret of the ways of God in history by which he accomplishes his designs.¹⁵⁵ Concerning the wisdom text 4QInstruction that frequently mentions ‘the mystery that is to come’ (רִז נְהִיָה) García Martínez writes that he regards it “as the representative of a new and different sort of Jewish wisdom, a wisdom whose authority is not grounded on human knowledge but on divine revelation.”¹⁵⁶

The concept of μυστήριον in 1 Corinthians is in line with Daniel’s and Qumran’s eschatological employment of the term. In Paul’s use the eschatological content of μυστήριον may vary: in 1 Cor 15:51 he uses the term for the resurrection but in 1 Cor 2:1, 7 he applies it to the cross.¹⁵⁷ Paul refers in 2:1 with the term “to the meaning that God has revealed in ‘the message of the cross’”¹⁵⁸ In 4:1 the term also refers to the message regarding Christ, hidden from human view and revealed through revelation.¹⁵⁹ The aspects of a) its previously being hidden and b) its in a veiled way being present in the Scriptures are valid for the understanding of mystery in Daniel, Qumran and Paul. But the content attributed to the mystery in 1 Cor 1–4 is unique for Paul.

The Dead Sea Scrolls have a strong eschatological flavor and apocalyptic writings were highly valued at Qumran as already appears from the fact that the caves produced twenty manuscripts of 1 Enoch – as many as of the book of Genesis – and of the book of

Welt, die sich verwirklichen wird, soll Trost geben (2 Bar 54:4, 81:4), die Hoffnung auf die endgültige Offenbarung stärken und zum Gehorsam gegenüber dem Gesetz führen, das zum ‘Dokument der Hoffnung’ auf eschatologische Verwandlung wird (cf. 2 Bar 51:7–12).” Cf. Paul: “For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope” (Rom 15:4).

¹⁵² Hengel, *Judentum*, 370–1: “Es ist kein Zufall, dass der – später in Qumran so bedeutsame – Begriff רִז = μύστηριον, wenn man von einer Stelle im profanen Sprachgebrauch bei Ben-Sira (8:18 Heb.) absieht, erstmalig mehrfach in diesem Kontext erscheint (Dan 2:18f. 27–30, 47); Cf. also G. Bornkamm, *TWNT* 4: 821; Baumann, *Mitte*, 176; Von Lips, *Traditionen*, 82.

¹⁵³ Preferred reading, cf. Chapter 3, note on 2:1.

¹⁵⁴ Bornkamm, “μυστήριον,” *TWNT* 4: 826.

¹⁵⁵ Cf. A. Lacocque, *Le Livre de Daniel* (Paris: Delachaux et Niestlé, 1976) 45.

¹⁵⁶ F. García Martínez, “Wisdom at Qumran: Worldly or Heavenly?” in *Wisdom and Apocalypticism in the Dead Sea Scrolls and in Biblical Tradition* (ed. F. García Martínez; Leuven: Peeters, 2003) 14.

¹⁵⁷ In Rom 11:25 the term concerns the future of Israel.

¹⁵⁸ Fitzmyer 171.

¹⁵⁹ Schrage 321; Schnabel 232.

Daniel parts of eight scrolls were found.¹⁶⁰ With respect to eschatology and knowledge, the language of 1 Cor 2:6-16 has clear affinities with the Dead Sea Scrolls. Paul and Qumran share not only the terms רִז (in 1 Cor: μυστήριον) and ידע (in 1 Cor: γινώσκω 2:8, 11, 12, 14, 16), but also the emphasis on רוח (πνεῦμα 2:10, 11, 12, 13) in this connection.¹⁶¹ Content and vocabulary of Qumran's core writings show that knowledge and understanding were of central importance in Qumran. We find this language particularly in the hymns; they give expression to the thankfulness and joy for being the recipients of revelation.¹⁶² Even though in the core writings the term חכמה itself occurs infrequently,¹⁶³ related terms abound.¹⁶⁴ The core writings of Qumran and 1 Cor 1-4 do not only share a great interest in revelation (cf. 1 Cor 2:6-12) and interpretation (cf. 1 Cor 2:13-16), but also in the role of God's Spirit in these processes.

However, one has to note a divergence concerning the role of the apostle and the Teacher here. Paul says "these things God has revealed *to us* through the Spirit" (2:10), while the Teacher of Righteousness declares "I, Thy servant, know by the Spirit which thou hast given *in me*."¹⁶⁵ For the Teacher and the apocalyptic seer revelation is entrusted to an individual, but for Paul it is given to the believing community, because the agent, the Holy Spirit, is given to the community. The community receives this wisdom through the mediation of the Teacher of Righteousness (1 CD 1:11, 1 Q pHab 7:4-5), the person who – to all appearances – speaks in the Hymns as the one who receives and transmits divine revelation (1 QH 1:21, 8:16, 12:12, etc.), not in the role of lawgiver or prophet but as a teacher because his revelation is based on the interpretation of Scripture. The Teacher of Righteousness is unique and necessary: "His person and work are

¹⁶⁰ M. Abegg, P. Flint, and E. Ulrich, eds. *The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible* (San Francisco: Harper, 1999) 480-5, 482: "All eight scrolls were copied in the space of 175 years, ranging from 125 BCE to 50 CE. Since Daniel was compiled later than any other book in the Hebrew Bible (about 165 BCE), these scrolls show that it was becoming popular and widely used at Qumran only forty years after being written."

¹⁶¹ Cf. also δόξα (2:7, 8), ἀποκαλύπτω (2:10), συγκρίνω (2:13), ἀνακρίνομαι (2:14, 15), πνευματικός (13, 15), πνευματικῶς (2:14), and νοῦς (2:16).

¹⁶² Küchler, *Weisheitstraditionen*, 90: "Die Gruppe von Qumran stellt sich darin als 'Weisheitsgemeinde' dar, als יחד כל אנשי סודי (1QH 14:18, cf. 21), die ihre geheimnisvolle Weisheit in der 'Ratsversammlung' Gottes (vgl. Jer 23:18, 22; Job 15:8) zu hören bekommen."

¹⁶³ Various explanations have been given: the term 'wisdom' was considered dubious (C. Perrot, "Les sages et la sagesse dans le judaïsme ancien" in *La sagesse biblique* [ed. J. Trublet; Paris: Cerf, 1995] 241, cf. 245-7), or too general (Hengel, *Judentum*, 402, n. 651) for the specific knowledge of the community.

¹⁶⁴ E.g. in the hymn of praise in 1QS 10:9-11:20 the poet never uses the word חכמה, but – as Wagner, *Heralds*, 69, n.85 lists – 'design' (מחשבת), 'will' (רצון), 'counsel' (עצה), 'mysteries' (רזין), 'wonders' (נפלאות), 'wondrous mysteries' (רזי פלא), and especially 'knowledge' (דעה), occur many times in this hymn.

¹⁶⁵ 1QH^a 5:35-36 (= 1QH 13:18-19): וְאֲנִי עֹבֵד יְדַעְתִּי בְרוּחַ אֲשֶׁר נָתַתָּה בִּי. Cf. also 1QH^a 6:36; with 'teacher' instead of 'your servant' as subject and with 'you, my God,' as object: 1QH^a 20:14-15 ("And I, the Instructor, I know you, my God, by the spirit that you have placed in me," וְאֲנִי מְשַׁכֵּל יְדַעְתִּיכָה אֵלֵי בְרוּחַ אֲשֶׁר נָתַתָּה בִּי, trans. C. Newsom, DJD 40).

constitutive for the self-understanding and theology of the community at Qumran.”¹⁶⁶ His role in the area of revelation is as central as that of the seer in apocalyptic literature. Yet the roles of both these figures differ from the role of the apostle Paul. The apostle transmits the gospel which he in turn received from others before him (1 Cor 15:3), he acknowledges others as fellow-apostles (3:5-9, 22; 4:1, 6, 9-13; 9:5), and shares his position as a sender of a letter of instruction with a brother (1:1).¹⁶⁷

There is another significant difference between apocalyptic literature and 1 Cor 1-4 with respect to the recipients of the knowledge of God and his plans. In the first body of writings, eschatological revelation may only be transmitted to the wise.¹⁶⁸ Wisdom is a requirement before revelation can take place but in 1 Cor 1-4 wisdom is given by God’s Spirit even to those who are counted as fools according to human standards (1 Cor 1:27; 2:10-12). Decisive in the ability to receive revelation is the Spirit and not the spiritual qualifications of the believer. Meanwhile, according to some exegetes Paul comes close to Qumran here, because they interpret τέλειοι in 1 Cor 2:6 as those who are morally or spiritually ‘mature,’ so that a special group within the church seems to be meant.¹⁶⁹ But with ‘perfect’ Paul refers to “those who believe” (1:21), or “those who are sanctified in Jesus Christ” (1:2).¹⁷⁰ There is irony in Paul’s use of τέλειοι here, as part of his rhetorical strategy to move his readers towards a different view of wisdom and being ‘wise.’ Wisdom is a gift and not an achievement in 2:6-16. “Those who hear the revealed word thereby become *teleioi*.”¹⁷¹

There is a correspondence in the belief in two stages of revelation in the course of time. The Apocalypticists and Qumran accept two phases, first the partial revelation to the seer or the Teacher, then the final revelation to all. Likewise, according to our text the present is the partial (cf. 1 Cor 4:8, 11-13; 13:12) and the final revelation (‘the day’) is still to come (1 Cor 3:13; 4:5). In the first phase revelation takes place through the Spirit (1 Cor 2:10), the final moment is the revelation (ἀποκάλυψις) of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Cor 1:7).

¹⁶⁶ Bockmuehl, *Revelation*, 49.

¹⁶⁷ See chapter 5.7 ‘Apostleship.’

¹⁶⁸ Bornkamm, “μυστήριον,” *TWNT* 4: 822, 35-7: “Die apokalyptische Erkenntnisse müssen darum von den Sehern sorgfältig bewahrt und dürfen nur an die Weisen weitergegeben werden (4 Ezra 12:36ff.; 14:5ff., 26, 45f.; cf. also 2 Bar 20:3; 48:3). “You alone were worthy to learn this secret of the Most High. Therefore write all these things that you have seen in a book, and put it in a hidden place; and you shall teach them to the wise among your people, whose hearts you know are able to comprehend and keep these secrets” (4 Ezra 12:36-38).

¹⁶⁹ BDAG s.v. 2, some also as ‘initiated’ in the mystery religions sense BDAG s.v. 3)

¹⁷⁰ See Chapter 3, note on 1 Cor 2:7.

¹⁷¹ Fitzmyer 174-5.

Conclusions Part II

Chapter 3

1. The phrase οὐκ ἐν σοφίᾳ λόγου (1:17) prepares the argument on wisdom. It refers primarily to the content of the gospel even though forms of speech are inextricably bound up with it. Paul does not so much argue against inappropriate or hollow rhetoric but against a brand of wisdom teaching that leads to a neglect of the cross. Of the two nouns in this expression λόγος remains in the background after 1:18 but σοφία has centre stage. The role of wisdom is also present in 2:4 where it says – according to the preferable reading – that the message came not ἐν πειθοῖ σοφίας.
2. The statement in 4:6a (Ταῦτα δέ, ἀδελφοί, μετεσχημάτισα εἰς ἑμαυτὸν καὶ Ἀπολλῶν δι' ὑμᾶς) implies a rhetorical strategy. The same verse also expresses two specific aims: ἵνα μάθητε τὸ Μὴ ὑπὲρ ᾧ γέγραπται and ἵνα μὴ φυσιοῦσθε. The first aim deals with Corinthian ideas which went beyond and were in conflict with Scripture. The second aim is directed against inflated attitudes (1:29; 4:8, 18–20) and divisive behaviour (1: 10–12). Both behaviour and teaching had a hyper-character in Corinth. The text calls the readers back to reality (3:1–4, 18; 4:7–16).

Chapter 4

3. Regarded from a rhetorical perspective the letter segment 1 Cor 1–4 belongs to the deliberative (συμβουλευτικόν) genre because its main purpose is exhortation (cf. παρακαλῶ in 1:10 and 4:16, as well as ὑμᾶς γράφω ταῦτα ... νοουθετῶν in 4:14). The text seeks to influence the thoughts and actions of the audience for the near future.
4. The rhetorical *propositio* of 1 Cor 1–4 is presented in 1:18, a verse in which the dual effect of the message of the cross is outlined. This message (λόγος) is in the first place a proclamation (κήρυγμα, 1:21, 2:4; cf. 'the word' of the prophets) and in the second place a narrative discourse (2:6–7; cf. Gal 3:1). It is defined as ὁ λόγος τοῦ σταυροῦ, a discourse concerning the crucified Messiah.
5. After the segment 1 Cor 1–4 begins with a letter opening in 1:1–9, the rhetorical *dispositio* is best seen as follows: 1:10–17 *narratio* (describing the situation and establishing ties through shared experiences); 1:18–3:17 *argumentatio* (the main argument) with 3:18–25 as a first (summarizing) *peroratio*; 4:1–13 *refutatio* (invalidating objections to Paul's conduct) and 4:14–21 a second (motivating) *peroratio*.

Chapter 5

6. Many who apply rhetorical analysis to 1 Cor 1–4 take 1:10 to be the *propositio*. This choice entails that the author's main purpose is to deal with the Corinthian quarrels. Yet, even though divisive behaviour is the problem Paul starts with, it is not the central theme of 1 Cor 1–4. The letter should not be interpreted as a political speech seeking to restore the harmony of the community but as an argument that reminds the readers of the unique reality of the crucified Christ as the source of salvation and wisdom (1:30; 2:16), as well as the only foundation of the community (3:11).

7. The sudden shift from party strife to wisdom in 1:17 introduces the main theme of 1 Cor 1-4. Nowhere else in his letters does Paul discuss wisdom. Apparently the situation necessitated him to deal with the relationship between the gospel and wisdom. He first argues with the help of Scripture that the wisdom of the world is in deep conflict with the message of the cross. Within the parameters of the wisdom of this age this proclamation is foolishness (1:18-23). Then Paul connects the cross with the wisdom of God (1:24-25) and goes on to elaborate this perspective in 2:6-16. This wisdom is available to all but not in the field of human calculations (3:18-20).
8. The reality and significance of the cross are very much at stake. Paul's foremost concern is that the cross not be made empty (1:17) and that "Jesus Christ and him crucified" (2:2) remains central in his apostolic relationship with the Corinthians. Even 2:6-16 on the wisdom of God is an explication of the word of the cross in 1:18b.
9. While the themes of strife (or divisions) and wisdom were contributed by the Corinthians, it is likely that the author himself diagnosed the 'Grundhaltung' of the Corinthians as boasting in human achievements or prerogatives (1:26-29). He summarizes it as 'boasting in men' (3:21) and calls on them to change it in the only legitimate form of boasting, that is 'in the Lord' (1:31). The section 1:18-31 begins with wisdom and ends with boasting. Apparently Paul saw a significant relationship. Because both concepts are grounded in Scripture through quotations, Scripture may throw light on this relationship.
10. The Spirit is the means of revelation (2:10) and the key to understanding the things of God (2:13). Whatever the Corinthians may have thought of πνευματικός, according to Paul the term is not reserved for an elite group, but is applicable to all believers. The πνευματικός is distinguished from the ψυχικός in 2:14. This latter term is rare and has no clear precedent in Greek tradition. Therefore Paul probably derived it from נָפֶשׁ in Jewish Biblical tradition. Against this background it means here the 'natural man' (cf. σῶμα ψυχικόν as present natural existence in 15:44). Like σοφός, γραμματεύς, and συζητήτης in 1:20a, ψυχικός is not a pejorative term but a term indicating the absence of God's Spirit in a person. The believer is not called ψυχικός because in Paul's theology every believer has received God's Spirit (2 Cor 1:22; Rom 8:15-16). Yet a believer may be σαρκινός or σαρκικός (3:1-3), that is not led by the Spirit but by his own human considerations and desires. The opposition πνεῦμα-σάρξ occurs in other Pauline letters (e.g. Gal 5:16-26; Rom 8: 3-8). 'Being fleshly' means that the Corinthian troublemakers are *behaving* like men without the Spirit (cf. Gal 3:3 ἐναρξάμενοι πνεύματι νῦν σαρκὶ ἐπιτελεῖσθε;). The final rhetorical question of this passage οὐκ ἄνθρωποι ἐστε (3:4) is significant because it locates the Corinthians in the camp of human wisdom, which – according to the argument – is opposed to the wisdom of God.
11. The metaphor of building in 1 Cor 3 is used to provide a test for the leadership practices in Corinth. The metaphor is part of common culture but here a relationship with the Old Testament and Jewish tradition is very likely because the text deals with the functioning of the people of God. Building appears several

times as an activity of Wisdom in the book of Proverbs. Either this sapiential association or the prophetic calling to build (cf. Jer 1:10), or prophetic texts on the rebuilding of Jerusalem (e.g. Isa 44:28) encouraged Paul to elaborate on this subject in the context of 1 Cor 1–4. The final test of a man’s work through fire on ‘the day’ (3:13, 4:5) is part of the eschatological setting of the letter (1:7–8).

12. Our text is not primarily a defence of Paul’s apostleship, except for the *refutatio* in 4:1–13. Yet this apostleship does play a role in the *narratio* and in 1 Cor 3–4. Paul presents himself in no way as the wise man they might like to hear and see. Instead, he calls himself a servant (3:5, 4:1). His distinction as apostle lies in the fact that he is entrusted with the gospel (1:17; 4:1). Through his ministry the Corinthians became believers and that is why he can call himself their father (4:14–16). Nevertheless, the church is not his church nor do they belong to any human leader but the leaders and apostles belong to them (3:22).
13. 1 Cor 1–4 is marked by oppositions. There is an ongoing opposition between wisdom and foolishness. But while these may change sides, the *cantus firmus* of the text is the basic opposition between human expectations and divine action.

Chapter 6

14. The wisdom of the Corinthian Christians very likely had a Hellenistic-Jewish mould. The church took root near the Diaspora synagogue and had contacts with Alexandrian Judaism, at least in the person of Apollos. The letter gives evidence of Hellenistic-Jewish tendencies in the Corinthian church. Not only was there resistance against the historical cross as a way of salvation, the letter also suggests a disparagement of the body (e.g. 6:12–20) and of bodily resurrection (chapter 15), a desire to transcend the mind in religious experience (chapter 14), and an elitist conception of the wise person (cf. 4:8–13). These features are also present in the writings of Philo of Alexandria. In Philo’s type of Hellenistic Judaism wisdom is the road to salvation reaching its goal in the vision of God.
15. The wisdom in 1 Cor 1–4 differs from the torah-like wisdom of Baruch and Sirach and from wisdom as an all-pervading spirit in Wisdom of Solomon. In Wis 1:7 the divine spirit has a universal character, as that which “filled the world” (πνεῦμα κυρίου πεπλήρωκεν τὴν οἰκουμένην) and “holds all things together” (τὸ συνέχον τὰ πάντα). Paul, however, links the divine spirit specifically to the community of believers (e.g. 1 Cor 2:10, cf. 12:7). However, wisdom in Paul’s letter agrees with wisdom in Wisdom of Solomon in confirming its relationship with the history of Israel.
16. Daniel and Qumranic literature agree with Paul that wisdom in the form of eschatological religious instruction needs to be revealed. Paul shares with Daniel and Qumran the ideas that 1) Wisdom is not by nature available to humanity, but hidden. 2) This wisdom is in some veiled way present in the Scriptures. 3) This wisdom will be revealed in time. 4) It is eschatological wisdom because the time of revelation is the end time. 5) This wisdom belongs to God and can only be given by God.
17. God’s wisdom in 1 Cor 1–4 differs from Apocalyptic writings and Qumranic literature, 1) regarding its content: Christ crucified. 2) This wisdom is given not to the apostle but to the community; the apostle is not unique as recipient of the

revelation of wisdom, as the apocalyptic seers and the Qumranic Teacher are. 3)
This wisdom does not require of its recipients that they have sufficiently advanced
in faith and life, but is available for all who desire to hear it.

PART III: SCRIPTURE IN 1 CORINTHIANS 1-4

Chapter 7: Introduction

In part II of this study the contribution of the citations and their original contexts has been left out of consideration. The rhetorical and thematic structure of 1 Cor 1–4 were established, but by remaining on the level of the New Testament text, a potential source of understanding has been left unexamined. It is our assumption that a scrutiny on the level of the Old Testament pre-texts will enrich, deepen and correct the understanding of 1 Cor 1–4.

1 Cor 1–4 contains a significant number of quotations and in the first section of each of the chapters 8–11 in part III we will pay attention to their role on the level of the New Testament text. The second section of these chapters analyzes the structure and meaning of the quotations in their original contexts. The third section evaluates the contribution to the understanding of 1 Cor 1–4 made by the pre-texts. Do these pre-texts lend force to the argument or do they weaken it? Do the quotations, with the impact of their Old Testament contexts behind them, widen or narrow the scope of the argument? Do they blur or sharpen its focus? Do they diversify or specify the meaning of the terms used, in particular the meaning of wisdom?

The letter is our starting point when we look at its dialogue with Scripture. We move from 1 Cor 1–4 to a pre-text and from a pre-text back to 1 Cor 1–4. Z. Ben-Porat says about intertextuality: “The literary allusion is a device for the simultaneous activation of two texts.”¹ A dialogical relationship exists between the two texts, in which the receptor text initiates an interest in the pre-text and the pre-text subsequently affects the understanding of the receptor text.²

1. Scripture, Greek and Hebrew

Even though Paul is aware of the variety in Scripture, he does not consider himself drawing from different texts. For him the books of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Psalms, Job, etc. do not have the status of independent writings but these books are part of one text with the name ‘Scripture.’³ Some suggest that Paul envisages a theological unity and not necessarily a literary unity when he uses ἡ γραφή or αἱ γραφαί.⁴ However, the

¹ Z. Ben-Porat, “The Poetics of Literary Allusion,” *PTL: A Journal for Descriptive Poetics and Theory of Literature* 1 (1976) 105–28, 107.

² Cf. Ben-Porat, “Poetics,” 114.

³ That for Paul individual passages derive their authority from the fact that they belong to Scripture is rightly emphasized by J.P. Heil, *The Rhetorical Role of Scripture in 1 Corinthians* (Leiden: Brill, 2005) *passim*. However, Heil’s view that as a result the significance of each quotation is partly determined by Scripture as a whole tends to short-circuit the uniqueness of particular texts and their literary contexts.

⁴ T. Söding, “Heilige Schriften für Israel und die Kirche. Die Sicht des ‘Alten Testaments’ bei Paulus,” in *Das Wort vom Kreuz* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1997) 225. Likewise, H. Hübner argues that Paul makes use of the Wisdom of Solomon and Baruch in a theologically significant manner and

theological connotation of the term Scripture cannot replace its primary meaning of a particular set of writings. When Paul quotes from the body of writings, which he calls 'Scripture,' these writings have for him a profound theological significance because they represent the living voice of God.⁵ But this does not extinguish the experiential reality that Scripture is a collection of literary texts. The literary quality of the quotations and the significance of their literary context remain valid. Every interpretation that does not render account of the literary quality of the texts is seriously limited, not only from a literary but also from a theological point of view.

For the New Testament writers Scripture appears to have been identical with the collection of books that make out, what is called, the Hebrew canon,⁶ and Paul has no explicit quotations from books of the Septuagint that are lacking in the Hebrew canon.⁷ In quoting Scripture Paul preferred the version that we know as the Septuagint because the majority of his around 100 Scripture-citations agrees with this text.⁸ Paul used the Septuagint extensively and H. Hübner even called Paul 'a Septuagint Jew.'⁹ Allowing some margin, the following numbers give an indication of Paul's quotation practice. A list by M. Silva indicates that while in the *homologoumena* 41 explicit citations agree with both LXX and MT, 17 agree with LXX against MT, and 6 agree with MT against LXX.¹⁰ C.D. Stanley employs stricter criteria for citations and orders the texts differently.¹¹ Koch discusses 7 Pauline quotations (4 from Isa, 2 from Job and 2 from 3 Kgdms) which need to have a different source than the LXX. It is clear that Paul did not depend exclusively on the Septuagint, at least not on the Septuagint we know. A possible explanation for this phenomenon is that Paul used a different, more literal, Greek translation, a precursor of the later translations of Aquila and Symmachus, or, more likely, a Hebraizing revision of the Septuagint. There is some material evidence for the existence

that this implies that these books have the value of Scripture for him (H. Hübner, "Vetus Testamentum und Vetus Testamentum in Novo receptum. Die Frage nach dem Kanon des Alten Testaments aus neutestamentlicher Sicht," *Jahrbuch für biblische Theologie* 3 [Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1988] 147-62).

⁵ Cf. Chapter 2.5 on Availability and relevance.

⁶ "Although the apostolic church left no canonical lists, in all likelihood it agreed with the mainstream of Judaism in this regard. Not without significance for the question is the fact that no explicit quotation from the Septuagint apocrypha appears in the NT, in Philo or in the literature from Qumran." (E.E. Ellis, "The Old Testament Canon in the Early Church," in *Mikra*, 679).

⁷ D.-A. Koch, *Die Schrift als Zeuge des Evangeliums* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1986) 47; U. Luz, "Paulinische Theologie als Biblische Theologie," in *Mitte der Schrift?* (ed. M. Klopfenstein; Bern: Lang, 1987) 123.

⁸ Cf. E.E. Ellis, *Paul's Use of the Old Testament* (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1957) 12-5.

⁹ H. Hübner, *Biblische Theologie des Neuen Testaments: Band 2: Die Theologie des Paulus* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993) 28.

¹⁰ Cf. M. Silva, "Old Testament in Paul," in *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters* (ed. G.F. Hawthorne et. al.; Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1993) 631, leaving another 28 citations which disagree with both MT and LXX and 9 which remain debated.

¹¹ Counting 34 (NT=LXX=MT), 44 (NT=LXX≠MT), and 5 (NT=MT≠LXX) (C.D. Stanley, *Paul and the Language of Scripture. Citation Technique in the Pauline Epistles and Contemporary Literature* [Cambridge: University Press, 1992] 67).

of Theodotion at the time of Paul.¹² For example, the citation in 1 Cor 15:54 agrees with Isa 25:8 Theodotion.¹³

Among recent leading scholars in the area of Paul's use of Scripture there seems to be a near consensus against Paul's use of the Hebrew.¹⁴ However, the option that Paul sometimes phrases the quotation from the Hebrew cannot be ruled out.¹⁵ Do the arguments advanced against his possible recourse to the Hebrew carry sufficient weight to exclude this option? Two major arguments are put forward. The first is that Paul clearly preferred a Greek translation (the Septuagint) in general.¹⁶ This, however, does not require that he exclusively depended on Greek translations.¹⁷ The Septuagint was as standard translation most appropriate for his Diaspora Jewish and Greek audience.¹⁸ W.D. Davies argues: "We can assume that Paul as a Pharisee studied the Scriptures in Hebrew. That he respected and generally cited the Septuagint in his epistles does not gainsay this.

¹² Cf. the discovery of a Greek scroll of the Minor Prophets at Naḥal Ḥever (1953) containing an early revision of the LXX from before the time of Paul. See for evidence for the existence of καίγε-Theodotion in the first half of the first century C.E.: A. van der Kooij, *Die alten Textzeugen des Jesajabuches* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1981) 125-56; E. Tov, "The Septuagint," *Mikra*, 182-3.

¹³ Koch, *Zeuge*, 63; F. Wilk, *Die Bedeutung des Jesajabuches für Paulus* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1998) 21, gives as objection against Paul's direct recourse to the Hebrew that it is difficult to conceive him consulting scrolls in two languages in the same context. In 1 Cor 15:54 he would cite from the Hebrew and in the next verse from the Septuagint, because the citation in 15:55 follows the Old Greek against the MT. This remark disregards the role of memory.

¹⁴ Koch, *Schrift*, 78-81, 57: "Die Ansicht, das Paulus in diesen Fällen direkt auf den HT zurückgreift und eine selbständige Übersetzung bietet, wird kaum noch vertreten"; Stanley, *Paul*, 67; Wilk, *Bedeutung* 17; J. R. Wagner, *Heralds of the Good News. Isaiah and Paul 'In Concert' in the Letter to the Romans* (Leiden: Brill, 2002) 345. A recent exception is T.H. Lim, *Holy Scripture in the Qumran Commentaries and Pauline Letters* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1997) 140-2, 161-3. Lim also argues that Paul - like the grandson of Sirach in his prologue - would have been aware of the difficulties of translating Hebrew into Greek (163-4).

¹⁵ Wilk allows: "Zwar wäre prinzipiell auch ein eigenständiger Rückgriff des Apostels auf M denkbar". (Wilk, *Bedeutung*, 21).

¹⁶ E.g. Stanley, *Paul*, 68.

¹⁷ As author and reader Paul differs from his near contemporary and fellow Jew of the Diaspora, Philo, who evidently knew no Hebrew (P.J. Tomson, *Paul and the Jewish Law* [Assen: Van Gorcum, 1990] 52); Y. Amir writes: "H.A. Wolfson hat behauptet, Philon kenne den hebräischen Originaltext und arbeite auch mit ihm, aber ich habe mich nirgendwo in seinen Schriften auch nur von Spuren einer Vertrautheit Philons mit dem hebräischen Text überzeugen können. ... Dies ist sicherlich ein überraschendes Ergebnis, wenn wir dagegenhalten, wie stark alle sonstige uns bekannte jüdische Bibelexegese dem hebräischen Text verhaftet ist" (Y. Amir, *Die hellenistische Gestalt des Judentums bei Philon von Alexandrien* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1983) 68-9.

¹⁸ In accordance with his missionary strategy in 1 Cor 9:19-23.

From as early as the middle of the second century BCE, the Septuagint was used as a matter of course in Palestine itself by people who knew Hebrew.”¹⁹

The second argument states that the use of Hebrew or Aramaic cannot be detected in his letters.²⁰ But then one must ask: are we likely to find ‘undigested’ Hebrew or Aramaic elements in the language of a fluent Greek writer? Only a multilingual writer, who is deficient in the language he writes in, may show traces of a different language. Paul, however, was quite fluent in Greek. While most scholars agree with the book of Acts that, born in Tarsus, Paul studied in Jerusalem as a youth and received the training of a Pharisee, many still doubt that he was proficient in Hebrew or, at least, that he took recourse to the Hebrew.

Concerning Paul’s use of Isaiah in Romans J.R. Wagner concludes: “At no point has it been found necessary to suppose that Paul has relied on a Hebrew or Aramaic text of Isaiah.”²¹ Wilk already argued that, besides the LXX as we know it, Paul used a partially revised LXX for Romans 9–11, as well as a more thoroughly revised Isaiah LXX–translation particularly elsewhere in his letters.²² This leads Wilk to the conclusion: “Either Paul’s citations originated from at least three different versions of the Septuagint, or its revision towards the Hebrew had not been carried out consistently.”²³

A simpler hypothesis than his use of several LXX–versions would be that Paul employed the LXX in a version largely agreeing with ours, and revised it from his knowledge of the Hebrew when it seemed appropriate to him. M. Hengel has no doubts that Paul could translate the Hebrew *souverän* into Greek.²⁴ It would have been an anomaly for a law-abiding Pharisee to speak only Greek.²⁵ Worth noticing is also Ellis’s remark that “from a psychological viewpoint it might be expected that one who knew the Scripture in several languages and had a thorough knowledge of the sense of Scripture would be less tied to any text–form.”²⁶ We can be sure that sense was of central

¹⁹ W.D. Davies, “Paul, from the Jewish point of view,” in *The Cambridge History of Judaism*, Vol. 3 (ed. W. Horbury et. al.; Cambridge: University Press, 1999) 687.

²⁰ M. Tiwald, *Hebräer von Hebräern. Paulus auf dem Hintergrund frühjüdischer Argumentation und biblischer Interpretation* (Freiburg: Herder, 2008) 181: “Aus seinen eigenen Schriften lässt sich zumindest keine Kenntnis des Hebräischen oder Aramäischen erraten.” A.B. Du Toit (“A Tale of Two Cities: ‘Tarsus or Jerusalem’ Revisited,” *NTS* 46 (2000) 398–9. Du Toit overstates the case when he says “Koch, as well as Stanley, has proved Paul’s absolute dependence on the LXX in his OT quotations.”

²¹ Wagner, *Heralds*, 345.

²² Wilk, *Bedeutung*, 41–42; F. Wilk, “The Letters of Paul as Witnesses to and for the Septuagint Text,” in *Septuagint Research* (ed. W. Kraus and R.G. Wooden; Atlanta: SBL, 2006) 264, 266.

²³ Wilk, “Letters,” 267.

²⁴ M. Hengel, “Der vorchristliche Paulus,” in *Paulus und das antike Judentum* (ed. M. Hengel and U. Heckel; Tübingen: Mohr, 1991) 292.

²⁵ “Ein gesetzestreuer Pharisäer und ein ‘Hebräer aus Hebräern’, der nur Griechisch sprach, wäre ein hölzernes Eisen.” “Griechisch was seine Muttersprache; aber er beherrschte auch die ‘heilige Sprache’ von Schrift und Liturgie, das Hebräische, und die Umgangssprache des jüdischen Palästinas, das Aramäische”; (Hengel, “Der vorchristliche Paulus,” 237–38).

²⁶ Ellis, *Use*, 14.

importance to him. Though we cannot prove recourse to the Hebrew text, attention to its possible influence is legitimate and necessary.²⁷

It is also important not to overlook the role of memory in ancient learning. The apostle would not need to carry Hebrew scrolls with him on his journeys, nor is it likely that he needed to consult a Greek translation during dictation. P. Achtemeier emphasized that locating references in a scroll without visible marks of division, was far from easy and urges “that authors did not ‘check references’ in the way modern scholars do (or ought to do!). In light of the pervasive orality of the environment, and the physical nature of written documents, references were therefore much more likely to be quoted from memory than to be copied from a source.”²⁸ Wagner notes in his introductory chapter the need to be aware of both oral and written sources.²⁹

In order to meet the problem of availability, Stanley proposes that on his travels Paul copied excerpts from a variety of manuscripts, which gave him a written anthology of biblical texts. All this was the result of “a regular and persistent study of Scripture.” However, why would he not know portions of Scripture by heart? It seems probable to me that on his travels by foot Paul rehearsed parts of the arguments in his letters, while he connected his thoughts with his knowledge of Scripture. The argument he starts in 1 Cor 1:18 was not something that suddenly crossed his mind when he came to the word εὐαγγελίζεσθαι, as H. Schlier once suggested.³⁰ To attribute a role to memory in letter writing does not undermine the value of written texts because memory only functions as a temporary deposit between the pre-text and the text of the letter.

To sum up this discussion: there are two observations to consider. The first is that a majority of scholars agree that Paul received training as a Pharisee in Jerusalem and this must have given him at least a working knowledge of the Hebrew language. The second states that Paul in a fairly small but significant number of his quotations departs from the Septuagint and agrees with the Masoretic Text. We conclude that Paul’s adapting a quotation from his knowledge of the Hebrew Bible is no less likely than his making use of an early Hebraizing revision of the Septuagint or an unknown Greek translation. This conclusion justifies paying attention to the Hebrew text of Scripture, even though the Septuagint remains the criterion in general.

²⁷ Cf. M. Philonenko, “Rhétorique Paulinienne et terminologie Qoumrânienne,” *RHPR* 84 (2004) 149–50: “Paul, en effet, a connu des traditions juives et des textes juifs, en hébreu ou en araméen. Rechercher derrière l’argumentation et sous les expressions grecques de Paul des modèles sémitiques est donc légitime et nécessaire.” Cf. the earlier work of W.C. van Unnik, “Reisepläne und Amen-sagen, Zusammenhang und Gedankenfolge in 2 Korinther 1:15–24,” in *Studia Paulina* (ed. J.N. Sevenster and W.C. van Unnik; Haarlem: Bohn, 1953) 215–34, observing that the subtle use made in 2 Cor 1:15–24 of the several meanings of מְנַח required proficiency in Hebrew and Aramaic.

²⁸ P. J. Achtemeier, “*Omne Verbum Sonat*: The New Testament and the Oral Environment of Late Western Antiquity,” *JBL* 109 (1990) 26–27. See also chapter 5.2 on Paul’s rhetoric.

²⁹ Wagner, *Heralds*, 21–27 emphasizes the variety of ways in which Paul encountered Scripture, including reading, hearing, and memory.

³⁰ H. Schlier, “Kerygma und Sophia,” in *Die Zeit der Kirche* (Freiburg: Herder, 1956) 206–7.

A different consideration than the possible influence of Scripture in Hebrew on 1 Cor 1–4, is that the Septuagint as a translation should not be isolated from the Hebrew text. The phenomenon of intertextuality is not restricted to the relationship between LXX and NT, but already manifests itself in the translation from Hebrew to Greek.³¹ Syntactic and semantic shifts have taken place in this process. This phenomenon is taken into account by both the New English Translation of the Septuagint,³² and by the Septuaginta-Deutsch.³³ The project of La Bible d’Alexandrie is especially interested in the independent character of the LXX as the Bible of the Early Church. The question whether the LXX is to be regarded as a literary work in its own right or as a translation dependent on its Hebrew original, remains an issue of scholarly debate.³⁴ From an intertextual perspective, however, its relationship to the Hebrew cannot be neglected. Even though at some stage in its reception history the LXX was read as an independent text, it remained a Greek translation of a Hebrew original.³⁵

The considerations in this section lead us to consider *Scripture* in both the Hebrew and Greek languages. In practice, the *Septuagint* has pride of place and we will study Scripture in the first place in the form of the Septuagint.³⁶ However, whenever it seems helpful we will also consider the Hebrew Text.³⁷

³¹ Cf. W. Weren, *Intertextualiteit en Bijbel* (Kampen: Kok, 1993) 21.

³² NETS seeks to do justice to what is called the principle of ‘interlinearity.’ This ‘interlinearity’ implies two dimensions: the horizontal dimension of the Greek text as a new entity and a unitary whole, and the vertical dimension of interference by the parent text, which may provide “linguistic information essential to the proper understanding of the Greek” (IOSCS, “A Prospectus for a Commentary on the Septuagint”).

³³ The constant practice of LXX-D is to italicize words that lack corresponding words in the MT and to insert a superscript plus sign when the opposite is the case.

³⁴ Cf. W. Kraus, “Hebräische Wahrheit und Griechische Übersetzung. Überlegungen zum Übersetzungsprojekt Septuaginta-deutsch (LXX-D),” *TLZ* 129 (2004) 992.

³⁵ The esteem accorded to the Septuagint differed over time. A. Pietersma summarizes the historical development with the following four stages: “(a) the Hebrew text as sole authority, (b) the Greek as crib to study the Hebrew, (c) the Greek as independently authoritative, (d) the debate over the relative authority of the Hebrew and the Greek.” (A. Pietersma, “A New Paradigm for Addressing Old Questions: The Relevance of the Interlinear Model for the Study of the Septuagint,” *Bible and Computer. The Stellenbosch AIBI-6 Conference* [ed. J. Cook; Leiden: Brill, 2002] 360. During the second stage the relative authority of the Hebrew and the Old Greek can be compared to that of a mother and her still dependent daughter. The third stage is represented by Aristas and Philo. For Philo the Hebrew Bible and the Septuagint were ‘sisters,’ equal in their divine origin. (*Mos.* 2:40). Yet even Philo and Aristas differ. When one compares Philo’s account of the origin of the LXX (*Mos.* 2:25–44) as a miraculously inspired translation with the sober report in the Letter of Aristas (301–11), two different views appear. Aristas describes the materialization of the LXX as an accurate but human effort, a work of ἐρμηνεία, which required the translators to reach agreement (συμφωνία) among themselves. For Philo, however, its translators were not mere interpreters but hierophants and prophets (οὐχ ἐρμηνεῖς ἐκείνους ἀλλ’ ἱεροφάντας καὶ προφήτας, *Mos.* 2:40).

³⁶ We add a remark on the book of Isaiah because it is the most important Scriptural source in 1 Cor 1–4. The Septuagint of Isaiah builds on the work of others in the form of oral or written translations, and adopts terminology of especially LXX Pentateuch (Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*,

2. Clarification of Terms

Because its various practitioners approach intertextuality in various ways, we need to clarify the most important terms we use. The ‘receptor text’ or ‘target text’ is the text in which the quotation occurs, while the ‘pre-text’ or ‘source text’ is the text from which the quotation is taken.³⁸ In chapters 8–11 we apply the literary term ‘pre-text’ not to the collection of texts called ‘Scripture’ but to the textual unit from which the citation derives. LXX Isaiah may be regarded as a single text, but a book like Isaiah is too large and unwieldy to function as the ‘pre-text’ of a quotation. We employ the term ‘pre-text’ to denote the particular textual environment to which a quotation originally belonged. The extent of a pre-text may vary from a poem, a psalm, a book, or part of a book. A pre-text may consist of a number of chapters, when these chapters manifest sufficient structural and semantic coherence. E.g. LXX Isa 28–33 is a textual unit that can be regarded as a pre-text because it is structured by woe-exclamations and semantically united by a recurrent and characteristic use of a number of Greek terms.

A theme is a topic that plays a significant role in a discourse. In the previous chapter we considered the prominent themes in 1 Cor 1–4. Some of these themes, those of the CROSS, APOSTLESHIP, and DIVISIONS, are limited to the situation of 1 Cor 1–4 and not derived from Scripture. But the themes of WISDOM and BOASTING are present in quotations, while GOD’S SPIRIT as well as BUILDING also may have roots in the pretext. However, this is not where we begin. Thematic and conceptual issues are the final step in our research because reliable intertextual relationships between texts first need to be established with the precise language of explicit and implicit quotations.

Compared with a theme, a *topos*³⁹ is more specific and more incidental in a discourse. The technical term *topos* derives from ancient rhetoric. This art could draw on a whole repertory of *topoi* and use them as schemes or tools for composition.⁴⁰ Though originally it meant the *place* where a useful phrase or idea could be found, the term later

103–34). That does not change the fact that Isaiah LXX is a generally coherent version. Interconnecting words, phrases and patterns throughout the book have led to the conclusion that LXX Isaiah is the work of one translator (Van der Kooij, *Textzeugen*, 31–2).

³⁷ Even though the manuscript of the complete Isaiah scroll from Qumran (1QIsa^a) is much older (2nd half of the 2nd century BC) than the extant copies of the MT, the latter version reaches back to an earlier stage of transmission. Cf. on the textual value of 1QIsa^a: Van der Kooij, *Textzeugen*, 74–119.

³⁸ Plett, H.F. “Intertextualities,” in *Intertextuality* (ed. H.F. Plett; Berlin: De Gruyter, 1991) 8.

³⁹ We could also use the modern term *motif* which suggests more or less the same idea but, other than *topos*, a motif is usually confined to the text itself (cf. J. van Luxemburg, M. Bal, W.G. Weststeijn, *Inleiding in de Literatuurwetenschap* [Muiderberg: Coutinho, 1985] 48, 137).

⁴⁰ Cf. also P. Claes, *Echos Echo’s. De Kunst van de Allusie* (Amsterdam: De Bezige Bij, 1992) 115–6, who gives as example of an ancient *topos* as tool for composition, the questions why? where? when? how? These provide an author with ideas to elaborate his argument.

became the name for the *phrase* or idea itself.⁴¹ E.R. Curtius adopted *topos* as a modern technical term and called it an *anonymous* phrase or thought, to indicate that the phrase in question transcends particular texts and authors.⁴² With the accent on content, a *topos* as a particular well-defined idea may float through a diachronically long and synchronically broad literary tradition. When we lay the accent on form a *topos* can be recognized as a ‘preformed expression,’⁴³ derived from a specific literary tradition.

In this study we speak of a *topos* when the idea or phrase is too common in a literary tradition or too undetermined regarding its origins to serve as an indicator for intertextuality in the restricted sense.⁴⁴ What we call *topoi* here may have been, as H.D. Plett describes it, quotations in the past but as autonomous language units they have assumed “the status of *adagia* and *aphorisms*.” “Devoid of their pre-texts they become worn out like ‘dead metaphors.’”⁴⁵ For example, the expression ‘Greeks seek wisdom’ (1 Cor 1:22) and the idea ‘judgment by fire’ (3:13) are too common to function as a reference to a source text. It is, therefore, important to distinguish between *topoi* and implicit quotations.

Quotations⁴⁶ are at the heart of intertextuality. A formal definition of quotation is “the inclusion of a segment of text A in text B.”⁴⁷ Instead of speaking of ‘quotations’ and ‘allusions,’ we use one term for the single phenomenon of borrowing from another text. The reasons for this terminological choice are both theoretical and practical. From the perspective of intertextual theory quotations and allusions do not in principle have a different function.⁴⁸ From a practical point of view it is often difficult to decide whether we are dealing with a quotation or with an allusion.⁴⁹ One faces, instead of two categories, a gliding scale. Yet, to be able to make necessary distinctions we differentiate

⁴¹ E. R. Curtius, “Begriff einer historischen Topik,” in *Toposforschung* (ed. M.L. Baeumer; Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1973) 9–11; *topoi* that were useful for all kinds of different arguments were called *topoi koinoi* or *loci communes*, ‘commonplaces.’

⁴² Curtius, “Topik,” 14: “Ein Topos ist etwas Anonymes. Er fliesst dem Autor in die Feder als literarische Reminiszenz. Er hat eine zeitliche und räumliche Allgegenwart wie ein bildnerisches Motiv. Die Toposforschung gleicht der ‘Kunstgeschichte ohne Namen’ im Gegensatz zur Geschichte der einzelnen Meister.”

⁴³ Cf. Koch, *Zeuge*, 17: “vorgeprägte Wendung,” adding: “Methodisch besonders schwer zu erfassen ist die in jüdischer und christlicher Literatur häufig begegnende *Verwendung der Sprache der Schrift* – bei Paulus die der Septuaginta. Dabei ist sowohl die Übernahme einzelner Wörter und Begriffe als auch die (bewusste und selbstverständliche) Formulierung im ‘Stil’ der Schrift, d.h. die Verwendung von in der Schrift vorgegebenen syntaktischen Strukturen, zu beobachten.”

⁴⁴ See Chapter 2.2

⁴⁵ Plett, “Intertextualities,” 16–7.

⁴⁶ ‘Quotation’ and ‘citation’ are used interchangeably.

⁴⁷ W.J.C. Weren, *Windows on Jesus* (London: SCM Press, 1999) 202.

⁴⁸ In the same way R.B. Hays uses the term ‘echo’ not only as part of a spectrum but also as an umbrella term in his concept of intertextuality (R.B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989]).

⁴⁹ This becomes evident when different authors diverge in classifying quotations and allusions. E.g. Stanley and Koch differ on the question whether 1 Cor 1:31 and 2:16 contain quotations.

between ‘explicit’ and ‘implicit’ quotations. The former have a “maximal possibility of recognition” and the latter, at the other end of the spectrum, a minimal possibility.⁵⁰ An explicit quotation is readily recognizable as a citation by means of an introductory formula or the specific language used. An implicit quotation does not have an introductory formula and is recognizable only by reading the text with an awareness of relevant Scripture.

Implicit quotations do not depend on an introductory formula but on certain words, phrases or constructions used. If the target text contains only one word of a source text, the chances that we are dealing with a quotation are very slim. Only in the case of a *hapax legomenon* in the source text may we have sufficient reason to consider a connection.⁵¹ Two examples are found in 1 Cor 4:13: the terms *περικαθήματα* and *περίψημα*, single instances in the New Testament, both occur only once in the Septuagint, which would make it easy to locate their place of origin. But in these cases an intertextual relationship with the LXX is not obvious. We have more certainty about the presence of a quotation when we discover the single occurrence of a combination of at least two words. A good example in our text is *σόφος ἀρχιτέκτων* (1 Cor 3:10), a unique combination in the New Testament as well as in the Septuagint (Isa 3:3). Even though the text gives no other signals that we are dealing with a quotation, it is unlikely that this shared word combination is coincidence.

3. Quotations

Every method needs to be plied to the material at hand. A literary approach needs to be refined to become a sensitive tool that is able to register the particular characteristics of a text. This is also true for intertextuality. Chapter 2.5 already indicated that there are good reasons to suppose that intertextuality will be a very suitable perspective to consider the letters of Paul. But in practice we need to gauge how intertextuality works in the case of 1 Cor 1–4. Which points of departure prove successful when applied to this text? In the first place, of course, the quotations, both the explicit and implicit ones. A list of them follows in the next paragraph and a discussion of the quotations in their immediate contexts follows in subsequent chapters. Secondly, the pre-texts from which the quotations derive appear to promise a fuller understanding of their intention and meaning within 1 Cor 1–4. Elements of the pre-text may affirm or contradict, or throw additional light on the meanings and patterns of 1 Cor 1–4 that we have observed in Part II. We will not restrict our research to the pericopes that constitute the immediate context of the quotations because it seems and may become clear that the wider contexts are also involved in the dialogue with 1 Cor 1–4. Thirdly, catchwords seem to play a dynamic role in connecting 1 Cor 1–4 and the quotations mutually. Fourthly, the quotations have an effect on their new context; they do not disappear seamlessly but

⁵⁰ Weren, *Windows*, 202.

⁵¹ Cf. J. van Ruiten, *Een begin zonder einde: De doorwerking van Jesaja 65:17 in de intertestamentaire literatuur en het Nieuwe Testament* (Sliedrecht: Merweboek, 1990) 15.

qualify and amplify the text of which they have become part. Finally, and this is mentioned in the preceding paragraph, beyond the quotations and their contexts there is also the possibility that Scripture is reflected in the form of *topoi*.

3.1 A List

In 1 Cor 1–4 the explicit quotation-character of 1 Cor 1:19 and 3:19 and 20 is generally accepted because these lines are introduced by a formula and can be clearly established in the pre-text. There is some difference of opinion whether one should consider 1:31 and 2:16 as citations. Even though 1:31 is introduced by a citation formula, the quoted fragment departs from the supposed pre-text. In 2:16 there is agreement with the pre-text but an introductory formula referring to Scripture is missing. The quotation in 2:9 is notoriously problematic because, even though an introductory formula is present, its origin is uncertain. In our approach these 6 texts are regarded as explicit quotations. To these we add significant implicit citations found in 1:20, 2:9, 3:10, 3:11, 4:4 and 4:5). A longer list of parallels between 1 Cor 1–4 and the books of the Septuagint is found in the Appendix.

1 Cor	LXX	1 Cor 1–4	LXX
1:19	Isa 29:14	γέγραπται γάρ, ἀπολῶ τὴν σοφίαν τῶν σοφῶν, καὶ τὴν σύνεσιν τῶν συνετῶν ἀθετήσω	ἀπολῶ τὴν σοφίαν τῶν σοφῶν καὶ τὴν σύνεσιν τῶν συνετῶν κρύψω
1:20	Isa 19:11	ποῦ σοφός;	ποῦ εἰσιν νῦν οἱ σοφοί σου;
	Isa 33:18	ποῦ σοφός; ποῦ γραμματεῦς; ποῦ συζητήτης;	ποῦ εἰσιν οἱ γραμματικοί; ποῦ εἰσιν οἱ συμβουλευόντες; ποῦ ...
	Isa 19:12	οὐχὶ ἐμώρανεν ὁ θεὸς τὴν σοφίαν τοῦ κόσμου	ἡ βουλὴ αὐτῶν μωρανθήσεται
	Isa 44:25		τὴν βουλήν αὐτῶν μωρεύων
1:31	Jer 9:22–23	καθὼς γέγραπται, ὁ καυχώμενος ἐν κυρίῳ καυχάσθω	ἐν τούτῳ καυχάσθω ὁ καυχώμενος, συνίειν καὶ γινώσκειν ὅτι ἐγὼ εἰμι κύριος
2:9	Isa 64:3	καθὼς γέγραπται, ἃ ὀφθαλμοὶ οὐκ εἶδεν καὶ οὐς οὐκ ἤκουσεν	οὐκ ἤκούσαμεν οὐδὲ οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ (ἡμῶν) εἶδον
	Isa 65:16	καὶ ἐπὶ καρδίαν ἀνθρώπου οὐκ ἀνέβη	οὐκ ἀναβήσεται αὐτῶν ἐπὶ τὴν καρδίαν
	Isa 64:3	ἃ ἠτοίμασεν ὁ θεὸς τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτόν	ἃ ποιήσεις τοῖς ὑπομένουσιν ἔλεον
	Is		(οἷς οὐκ ἀνηγγέλη περὶ αὐτοῦ,

	52:15		ὄψονται, καὶ οἱ οὐκ ἀκηκόασιν, συνήσουσιν)
2:16	Is 40:13	τίς γὰρ ἔγνω νοῦν κυρίου, ὃς συμβιβάσει αὐτόν;	τίς ἔγνω νοῦν κυρίου, καὶ τίς αὐτοῦ σύμβουλος ἐγένετο, ὃς συμβιβᾷ αὐτόν;
3:10	Isa 3:3	σοφὸν ἀρχιτέκτονα	σοφὸς ἀρχιτέκτων
3:11	Isa 28:16	θεμέλιον ... θεῖναι	ἐμβαλῶ εἰς τὰ θεμέλια
3:19	Job 5:13	γέγραπται γάρ, ὁ δρασσόμενος τοὺς σοφοὺς ἐν τῇ πανουργίᾳ αὐτῶν	ὁ καταλαμβάνων σοφοὺς ἐν τῇ φρονήσει
3:20	Ψ 93:11	καὶ πάλιν, Κύριος γινώσκει τοὺς διαλογισμοὺς τῶν σοφῶν ὅτι εἰσὶν μάταιοι	κύριος γινώσκει τοὺς διαλογισμοὺς τῶν ἀνθρώπων ὅτι εἰσὶν μάταιοι
4:4	Job 27:6	οὐδὲν γὰρ ἑμαυτῷ σύνοιδα	οὐ γὰρ σύνοιδα ἑμαυτῷ
4:5	Isa 29:15	τὰ κρυπτὰ τοῦ σκότους ... τὰς βουλὰς τῶν καρδιῶν	οἱ ἐν κρυφῇ βουλήν ποιοῦντες καὶ ἔσται ἐν σκότει τὰ ἔργα αὐτῶν

3.2 Pre-texts

Quotations belong to a context, not only the ‘new’ context in the letter but also to the ‘old’ context in Scripture. In Chapter 4.1 we have demarcated 1 Cor 1–4 as a textual unit and in Part III this unit constitutes the (receptor) text. The words of the quotations in 1 Cor 1–4 do not only occur on the level of the receptor text, but also on that of the pre-text. Such a pre-text may consist out of one or several chapters that give sufficient evidence of forming a textual unit (e.g. LXX Isa 28–33). Some studies already argued that Paul often refers to texts that belong to the same cluster of chapters.⁵² Wilk has observed more recently that the apostle in his use of the book of Isaiah focuses on certain sections.⁵³ For the quotations and allusions from Isa 28 and 29 he restricts himself to the chapters 28–29 (28:7–29:24) and only adds the mention of Isa 33:18, alluded to in 1 Cor 1:20. Comparable conclusions are reached by Wagner who, however, does not want to be too specific in the selection of passages.⁵⁴ In relation to the presence of Isaiah in the Letter to

⁵² C.H. Dodd, *According to the Scriptures: The Sub-structure of New Testament Theology* (London: Nisbet, 1952) 126 concluded that the method of biblical study practiced by the NT authors “included, first, the selection of certain large sections of the Old Testament Scriptures, especially from Isaiah, Jeremiah and certain minor prophets, and from the Psalms.” C.J.A. Hickling, “Paul’s Reading of Isaiah,” in *Studia Biblica 1978*: III (ed. E.A. Livingstone; Sheffield, 1980) 215–23, observed a concentration of quotations from Isaiah 9–11, 28–29, 49–51, and 52–55.

⁵³ Wilk, *Bedeutung*, 342–9. The following sections are most frequently alluded to: Isa 28:7–29:24; Isa 43:18–45:25; Isa 49:1–51:6; Isa 52:4–54:17; Isa 59:1–61:3 (344).

⁵⁴ Wagner, *Heralds*, 344, n.5, considers Wilk’s “precisely-delineated” contexts of Paul’s citations and allusions in Isaiah not warranted by the evidence.

the Romans, Wagner singles out the three clusters Isa 1-11, 28-29, and 52-53, and notes in addition that many connections within LXX Isa exist between the chapters 40 and 52.

Paul's quotation practice suggests that he knew or read Scripture not so much as individual verses but in the form of passages or units. This should not surprise us. The synagogue had a central place in Jewish religious life and during services the Law and the Prophets were read in the form of pericopes. In the early phase of reading from the Prophets, the only requirement for the passage was a certain affinity with the preceding Pentateuch pericope. "A verbal and thematic link between them was needed, so that the passage from the prophet 'resembled' the passage from the Tora. ... This 'magnetizing of texts' existed already before the fall of the temple."⁵⁵ This leads us to the next paragraph.

3.3 Catchwords

Within the field of intertextuality, catchwords (*Stichworte*) may provide the initial impulse that leads an author to a place in Scripture. In rabbinical interpretation (Hillel's second rule, *gezera shawa*) identical or synonymous words, occurring in different contexts, may mutually explicate one another. The rabbinic rule relates to intertextuality because it also involves the simultaneous activation of two texts. In employing catchwords, Paul values the semantic aspect, so that their significance reaches further than verbal congruence.⁵⁶ Catchwords contribute in Paul's letters to the forming of composite quotations,⁵⁷ or to the development of his argument, as in the case of λογίζομαι,⁵⁸ and λίθος.⁵⁹ In connection with this procedure, a word from the immediate Isaianic context may return in the new context of the quotation.⁶⁰ A word that has functioned as a catchword for 1 Cor 1-4 is σοφός. This word is mentioned by E.E. Ellis but only in relation to 1 Cor 3:19-20 with reference to Job 5:13 and Ψ 93:11.⁶¹ Its wider function will yet become apparent.

'Wisdom' and 'wise man' are momentous words in 1 Cor 1-4 and this emphasis is reflected in the citations. The catchword σοφός is explicitly or implicitly present in most citations. The term occurs not only in 1 Cor 3:19 and 20 but also in the first quotation

⁵⁵ C. Perrot, "The Reading of the Bible in the Ancient Synagogue," in *Mikra*, 157; the Talmud speaks simply of 'resemble him' (לִיְהוֹם, b. *Meg.* 29b). Cf. I. Elbogen, *Der jüdische Gottesdienst in seiner geschichtlichen Entwicklung* (3rd ed.; Frankfurt: Kaufmann, 1931) 177.

⁵⁶ E.E. Ellis, *Paul's Use of the Old Testament* (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1957) 50.

⁵⁷ Cf. O. Hofius, "Der Psalter als Zeuge des Evangeliums," in *Paulusstudien 2* (Tübingen: Mohr, 2002) 49, on Rom 3:10-18: "Paulus hat also die verschiedene Texte aufgrund ihrer sachlich-inhaltlichen Verwandtschaft zusammengestellt, wobei auch Stichwortverbindungen eine nicht unwichtige Rolle gespielt haben dürfen."

⁵⁸ J. Jeremias, "Zur Gedankenführung in den paulinischen Briefen," *Studia Paulina*, 149-51.

⁵⁹ Wagner's (*Heralds*, 126-57) long discussion of Paul's use of Isa 8:14 and 28:16 shows that "hearing the two stone passages together enriches them both (150)." Wagner notes many words that serve as links for Paul in interpreting Scripture (cf. e.g. 165, 311) but also points out that catchwords are only part of a larger picture and are insufficient to account for Paul's hermeneutics (347, n.17).

⁶⁰ Wilk, *Bedeutung*, 220-39.

⁶¹ Ellis, *Paul's Use*, 50.

from Isa 29:14, and is present in the immediate context of the citation from Jer 9:23.⁶² In 1 Cor 3:20 the text amends “thoughts of men” into “thoughts of the wise.” An exception is the citation of unclear origin in 1 Cor 2:9. In Chapter 6 of this study we argued that the word σοφός was probably even more important for the Corinthians than σοφία. Members of the community apparently wanted to be regarded as σοφός (“If someone considers himself to be wise,” 1 Cor 3:18; cf. 4:10).

The first citation (from Isa 29:14) follows immediately after the *propositio* and consequently occupies a key position in the argument on wisdom. Moreover, this citation abounds with wisdom-terms (σοφία, σοφοί, σύνεσις, συνετοί). This is remarkable in a saying from the Later Prophets because these books rarely touch on wisdom and statistics show that in their pages wisdom-terms seldom occur. The most important term, σοφία, is found in these books 11 times,⁶³ and only in the books of Isaiah (5 times) and Jeremiah (6 times).⁶⁴ Still the citations in 1 Cor 1–4 direct us to these two prophetic books. The diagram below shows that wisdom language is more common in LXX Isa 28–33 than in the rest of the book. The same is valid for Jer 8–10, the larger context of the quotation from Jer 9:23 in 1 Cor 1:31. The diagram focuses on books, clusters of chapters and the frequency of wisdom-related words.

	1 Cor 1–4	1 Cor	Paul ⁶⁵	NT ⁶⁶	Isa 28–33	Isa	Jer 8–10	Jer	OT ⁶⁷	LXX
σοφία	16	17	19	51	2	5	3	6	150	254
σοφός	10	11	15	20	2	5	4	7	163	200
σύνεσις	1	1	1	7	3	11	–	1	85	128
συνετός	1	1	1	4	3	5	1	6	36	53
μωρία	5	5	5	5	–	–	–	–	–	2
μωρός	4	4	4	14	2	3	–	1	8	37

⁶² The second line of Isa 40:13, of which the first line is quoted in 1 Cor 2:16, has the closely related term σύμβουλος.

⁶³ By way of comparison, σοφία features 8 times in the Torah, 19 times in the Early Prophets (including 1 and 2 Chronicles), 113 times in the Writings (without Chronicles) and 104 times in the books of the Greek Bible which do not occur in the Masoretic Text (LEH, s.v.).

⁶⁴ LXX Isa 10:13; 11:2; 29:14; 33:6; (50:4 only A); and LXX Jer 8:9; 9:23; 10:12; 28:15; 30:1(twice).

⁶⁵ This column represents the undisputed letters: 1 Thessalonians, Galatians, 1–2 Corinthians, Romans, Philippians, Philemon.

⁶⁶ W.F. Moulton, and A.S. Geden, eds. *A Concordance to the Greek Testament* (6th ed. I.H. Marshall; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2002).

⁶⁷ J. Lust, E. Eynikel and K. Hauspie, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1992, 1996). The numbers pertain to the LXX without the books outside the Hebrew canon. The last column contains all books of the Septuagint. Source for the other four columns with LXX references: E. Hatch and E. Redpath, *A Concordance to the Septuagint* (2nd ed.; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998).

The first line shows that σοφία is concentrated in 1 Cor 1–4. There are only three instances of Paul’s use of the term elsewhere. This is nearly to the same extent true for σοφός. The unique prominence of μωρία and μωρός in 1 Cor 1–4 is even more striking. The opposite μωρία is absent from the New Testament except for its 5 occurrences here. The diagram also shows the proportionally high density of wisdom terms in Isa 28–33 and Jer 8–10.

When we look at Scripture from an intertextual perspective the occurrences of σοφός turn out to be more interesting than σοφία. Concordances show that the word σοφός occurs only 5 times (3:3, 19:11, 19:12, 29:14, 31:2) in LXX Isaiah. In the order of the book, the first place, Isa 3:3, has the expression σόφος ἀρχιτέκτων, a unique combination in the New Testament as well as in the Septuagint. In 19:12 we meet σοφός in the question “Where are now your wise men?” echoed in 1 Cor 1:20. The verse with the next occurrence of σοφός (Isa 29:14) returns in the form of an explicit quotation.

Isa 31:2 is the only place with σοφός in Isaiah without verbal connections with 1 Cor 1–4; it contains the phrase καὶ αὐτὸς σοφός with God as subject. In the next chapters of this study we will consider the possibility that this verse and its context also play a role. To sum up, the findings are that in LXX Isaiah σοφός occurs in 4 places and each of those 4 places appears to be related to in 1 Cor 1–4:

- Isa 3:3 (the word combination σοφός ἀρχιτέκτων is unique in the LXX) turns up in 1 Cor 3:10.
- Isa 19:11–12 has the word σοφός twice in two verses (the question ποῦ εἰσιν νῦν οἱ σοφοί σου appears to be alluded to in 1 Cor 1:20)
- Isa 29:14 ἀπολῶ τὴν σοφίαν τῶν σοφῶν is quoted in 1 Cor 1:19.
- Isa 31:2 contains a rare ascription of wisdom to God: καὶ αὐτὸς σοφός (cf. מֵתִיבָהּ אֱלֹהִים) and may very well play a role behind 1 Cor 2:6–7 in the shift from man’s wisdom to God’s (ἀλλὰ λαλοῦμεν θεοῦ σοφίαν, 2:7).

3.4 Quotation thresholds

The interplay of quotations with their new context involves resistance and integration. H.F. Plett sheds light on the aspect of resistance:

The reception of quotation texts does not proceed evenly but is retarded again and again by ‘quotation thresholds.’ Quotations constitute reception obstacles, which impede the process of text communication. The seams between the quotation and its context do not only endanger the homogeneity of the literary structure, but also the unity of perception. The perception is diverted by something alien and unexpected, which requires integration.⁶⁸

In contrast with this aspect of resistance, the aspect of integration entails that the quotation is no longer a foreign element in the target text. From this perspective it would

⁶⁸ H.F. Plett, “Intertextualities,” 16.

be a serious mistake to put the quotation between brackets or to reduce it to a footnote. Instead, a text adopts the quotation, makes it its own, and even assimilates it. If it were not for the quotation formula and a familiarity with Scripture, we might not even recognize some quotations. Quotation thresholds pay tribute to the dialectical relationship between the quotation and its new context, a dynamic of resistance and integration.

3.5 The function of quotations

Koch observes that Paul carefully selected most of his citations to enlist them as an expression of his own theological ideas. They have become essential components of his argument.⁶⁹ The high value of the citations for his argument also explains why Paul may encroach upon their meaning and wording.⁷⁰ An explicit quotation with its introductory formula “(for) it is written,” implies authoritative support. The New Testament text refers to Scripture as authoritative teaching. This agrees with the way Scripture presents itself because “the essential rhetorical quality of the Old Testament is this assertion of authority.”⁷¹ The authority of Scripture is implied in 1 Cor 4:6, a verse that instructs the audience not to go beyond what is written.

And yet, the intention of the formula “it is written” goes beyond the function of a proof-text. According to Koch’s analysis of Paul’s citations, the view that quotations are meant to give authoritative sanction is not false, but wholly inadequate.⁷² The following effects are particularly relevant for intertextuality. As we outlined in Chapter 2.4, it consists of linking text and pre-text, initiating interaction, and causing transformations. The quotation establishes a link between Paul’s letter and a pre-text. This link is determined by retracing the citation and defining the segment to which it belongs. The link brings about interaction between two levels, between the quoted words and their contexts in the target text and in the pre-text. As a result of this intertextual relationship transformations in meaning and structure take place in the transition from pre-text to target text. They enrich or restrain, qualify, stimulate and amplify the argument of the author.⁷³

⁶⁹ Koch, *Zeuge*, 284: “Diese Schriftzitate sind damit ein konstitutiver Bestandteil der Argumentation des Paulus, die gar nicht unter Absehung von den Zitaten erfasst werden kann.”

⁷⁰ “Die hohe argumentative Bedeutung der Schriftzitate und der radikale Zugriff des Paulus auf Inhalt und oft auch Wortlaut der Schriftzitate bedingen einander gegenseitig” (Koch, *Zeuge*, 285).

⁷¹ G.A. Kennedy, *Classical Rhetoric and its Christian and Secular Tradition from Ancient to Modern Times* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980) 121.

⁷² Koch, *Zeuge*, 284.

⁷³ S. Morawski, “The Basic Functions of Quotations,” in *Sign, Language, Culture* (ed. A. Greimas et al.; The Hague, 1970) 694, speaks of a quotation’s ‘stimulative-amplificatory’ function.

4. Outlook

We have found in Part II, particularly in the rhetorical analysis of chapter 5, that 1 Cor 1–4 can be regarded as one argument. A number of features in the text can be explained as being occasioned by the situation in Corinth. This applies clearly to the opening (1:10–17) and final (4:14–21) sections, pericopes which have been identified as *narratio* and *peroratio* of the rhetorical structure. In this way 1 Cor 1–4 begins and ends close to the specific situation of the audience. The reasons for the form and content of the central section (1:18–4:13) are less clear. We argued in chapter 6, that the background for the discussion on wisdom consisted of Hellenistic-Jewish ideas circulating in Corinth. While this religion-historical *Sitz im Leben* may explain the occasion, it accounts insufficiently for the content of Paul's own teaching on wisdom. What is in this the role of Scripture? Does Scripture contribute to his understanding of wisdom? Does it provide a literary background to Paul's rhetorical questioning and antithetical reasoning?

The following chapters will deal with the textual units 1 Cor 1:18–25 (chapter 8), 1:26–31 (chapter 9), 2:1–16 (chapter 10), and 3:1–4:21 (chapter 11). Each unit contains one or more explicit citations. The explicit citations provide in each unit the starting point for the study of the unit's relationship with Scripture. Every chapter opens with (1) characteristic features of the structure and meaning of the letter pericope, followed by (2) a discussion of relevant units of Scripture, and 3) the reception of these units of Scripture in 1 Cor 1–4.

Chapter 8: Wisdom and the Cross (1 Cor 1:18-25)

In the first section of this chapter two characteristic features of 1 Cor 1:18-25, antithesis and paradox, as well as the position of the quotations within this pericope, will pass in review. In the second section we turn to the original context of the quotations, to discover the meanings and patterns present there. In the third and final section the lines of the previous sections are drawn together and comparisons will be made between the original and the new context of the quotations. We will consider whether and how the original context contributes to our understanding of 1 Cor 1:18-25. We will not only discuss continuities but also discontinuities between the source text and the target text.

1. Structural and Semantic Features of 1 Cor 1:18-25

1.1 Antithesis

Antithesis shapes the sentence structure throughout 1 Cor 1:18-25. In 1:18a/18b; 1:22/23a and 1:23b/24 the oppositions are expressed in the form of antithetic parallelism.¹ The *propositio* 1:18 consists of two contrasting lines (with μέν-δέ). This antithesis consists of two types of reaction ('foolishness' or 'power of God') elicited by the word of the cross, and at the same time two kinds of effect on its hearers.² In 1:18, 21-24 the recipients of the word of the cross are divided in 'those who are being lost' and 'those who are being saved' (18), in 'the world' and 'those who believe' (21), in Jews and Greeks over against 'the called' (22).

The semantic, syntactic, and pragmatic structure of the antitheses in 1:18-25 suggests an imbalance between the opposing entities. When we look at the semantic imbalance, the general verdict 'foolishness' in 1:18a is contrasted with *power* in 18b, instead of with wisdom, as one would expect. While 'foolishness' is a general value judgement, δύναμις θεοῦ without article is to be taken in a definite sense: 'the (very) power of God'.³

Considering the syntactic imbalance, the stress falls on the second line through the additions of 'us' to 'those who are being saved' and 'of God' to 'power'. The second line outweighs the first and carries the argument forward. This pattern is continued in the two parallelisms in verses 22-24, where the stress also falls on the longer B line.⁴

¹ Cf. Merklein 170.

² Twice ἔστιν with the dative seems best understood as having both meanings: response and effect. In this construction human and divine judgment are intertwined (Schrage 173). Cf. Wilckens, *Weisheit*, 21-2: both a judgment *by* men and a judgment *about* men.

³ See Wallace, *Grammar*, 256-64, on "anarthrous pre-verbal nominatives".

⁴ J. Jeremias (*Neutestamentliche Theologie. Die Verkündigung Jesu* [Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlag, 1971] 28) observes concerning dominical sayings in the gospels: "(Es) ergibt sich, dass die Verwendung des antithetischen Parallelismus in den Worten Jesu einheitlich dadurch

- A) ἐπειδὴ καὶ Ἰουδαῖοι σημεῖα αἰτοῦσιν
καὶ Ἑλληνας σοφίαν ζητοῦσιν,
B) ἡμεῖς δὲ κηρύσσομεν Χριστὸν ἐσταυρωμένον,
- A) Ἰουδαίοις μὲν σκάνδαλον
ἔθνεσιν δὲ μωρίαν,
B) αὐτοῖς δὲ τοῖς κλητοῖς,
Ἰουδαίοις τε καὶ Ἑλλήσιν, Χριστὸν θεοῦ δύναμιν καὶ θεοῦ σοφίαν.

The positive effect of the cross prevails because the centre of gravity of the long sentence of 22–24 lies in verse 24, which says that Christ is the manifestation of God’s power and of God’s wisdom. The called who see this are “both Jews and Greeks,” which gives the acceptance of the cross a universal significance.

The verb σώζω in verses 18 and 21 indicates that the cross is decisive in the area of soteriology, while the use of the present participles ἀπολλύμενοι and σωζόμενοι indicates that a definite situation has not yet been reached. Moreover, ‘Jews’ and ‘Greeks’ refer in verses 22–23 to those who reject the word of the cross but also to ‘the called’ in verse 24. The religious and national dualism from the Jewish perspective between Jews and Greeks (or ‘nations’ in 1:23) is not adopted but transcended by the gospel (1:24, cf. Gal. 3:28). There is also no simple division between believers and unbelievers in the manner of sons of light and sons of darkness in the Dead Sea scrolls.⁵ A dualist view of humanity is further resisted by the classification in three groups of πνευματικοί, ψυχικοί, and σαρκικοί in 2:10–3:3.⁶ It is also improper to regard the use of ‘this age’ (1:20) as a sign of eschatological dualism because a terminological counterpart of ‘this age’ is lacking.

For the understanding of our text it is of central significance that the syntactic antithesis in 1:18–25 derives fundamentally from the contrast between on the one hand ‘the wisdom of word’ (1:17), ‘wisdom of the wise’ (1:19), ‘wisdom of the world’ (1:20) and on the other hand the foolishness of the word of the cross (1:18, 20, 23).

1.2 Paradox

gekennzeichnet ist, dass der Ton auf den zweiten Zeile liegt.” In the antithetic parallelism of the Old Testament, however, the second line often serves to give support to the first by adding a contrasting statement (28).

⁵ E.g. according to 1QS 3:17–21, God created the spirit of light and the spirit of darkness, or the spirit of truth and of falsehood, which govern respectively the lives of the sons of light and the sons of darkness. Even though in 1 Corinthians ‘calling’ (1: 2, 9, 24, 26) and faith (1: 21, 24) are distinguishing marks, our text does not divide humanity in ‘the called’ and ‘the not called’, or in ‘believers’ and ‘unbelievers’.

⁶ The earlier view that the section 2:6–3:3 should be read in a Gnostic dualistic manner on the basis of the distinctions τελείοι (2:6) – νήπιοι (3:1), and πνευματικοί (2:13,15) – ψυχικοί (2:14), has generally been abandoned.

According to G. Hotze Paul made use of paradox – a seemingly absurd or self-contradictory statement – not only as a linguistic tool but also as an appropriate model (*Denkform*) for a theological content.⁷ Paul is inclined to make use of paradox in his letters at quite a number of occasions but the climax as well as the final ground of all Paul's paradoxes is the cross.⁸ Hotze's idea that paradox is a Pauline theological model can be substantiated in the case of 'weakness.' The weakness of the cross is not just a figure but a reality for Paul: the crucified one was truly weak (2 Cor 12:4). In 1 Cor 1:25b he does not speak of the weakness of Christ, but of "the weakness of God," which makes it a paradox. It even became a principle for Paul that "power is made perfect in weakness" (2 Cor 12:9). Can we say the same in the case of foolishness? The parallel terms 'foolishness' in 25a and 'weakness' in 25b are used in the same manner. The terms convey the verdict on the crucifixion of the Messiah from the perspective of the world and the world's experience. That there is more to be said about the cross already appeared in 1:18 on its power, and will appear in 3:18–23 on its wisdom.

In the general picture of the Bible 'God' and 'foolishness' certainly do not go together, so that we face a paradox. A dictionary definition describes a paradox as "both perplexing and disturbing because it is not clear which of one's well entrenched beliefs should be rejected, while it is plain that in the interests of consistency some modification must be made."⁹ The text provokes the readers to modify their deep convictions of what is wise and what is foolish with regard to God's actions. The paradoxical statement 'the foolishness of God' in verse 25 is the crown on the argument in 1:18–24, which already spoke of the foolishness of the message in v.21 and the foolishness of the crucified Messiah in v.23.

1 Cor 1:25 does not simply say "foolishness is wiser than wisdom" but "the foolishness of God is wiser than *men*, meaning: "wiser than *the wisdom of men*."¹⁰ The text introduces a different level of wisdom by speaking of 'the wisdom of God' in contrast to 'the wisdom of men.' In this concluding verse (cf. ὅτι) of 1:18–25 the primary contrast is no longer that between foolishness and wisdom or weakness and strength, but between God and man, between that which belongs to God and that which belongs to man.¹¹ The emphatic position of the genitive θεοῦ in v.24 ("God's power and God's wisdom") has already prepared this contrast.

⁷ G. Hotze, *Paradoxien bei Paulus. Untersuchungen zu einer elementaren Denkform in seiner Theologie* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1997) 97.

⁸ G. Hotze, *Paradoxien*, 56–7.

⁹ J. Speake, ed., *A Dictionary of Philosophy* (London: Macmillan, 1979) 243.

¹⁰ Verse 25a should be understood as an elliptic expression or condensed comparison, signifying "the foolishness of God is wiser than *the wisdom of men*" (cf. Moule 98).

¹¹ "Die grundlegende Antithese, von der aus der ganze Text verstanden werden muss, ist diejenige zwischen Gott und Menschen, zwischen dem erstaunlichen Handeln Gottes ('das Wort vom Kreuz') und dem Trachten dieser Welt und Zeit ('die Weisheit des Wortes') (H.-R. Weber, *Kreuz. Überlieferung und Deutung der Kreuzigung Jesu im neutestamentlichen Kulturraum* [Stuttgart: Kreuz Verlag, 1975] 120); Baumann, *Mitte*, 111–2.

Is verse 25 intended in our text as a general theological statement, even a timeless maxim? Conzelmann takes it to be a timeless maxim,¹² but the text does not warrant this.¹³ The definite articles in τὸ μωρόν and τὸ ἄσθενές suggest a specific manifestation of God's foolishness and weakness: Χριστὸς ἐσταυρώμενος (1:23).¹⁴ To make the meaning of v.25 clear, Barrett translates: "For this, God's foolishness, is wiser than men, and this, God's weakness is stronger than men."¹⁵ We end this paragraph with the conclusion that from the pragmatic point of view the passage 1:18–25 has a disturbing effect. The frequent use of antithesis requires of the readers a decision of acceptance or refusal and does not allow a neutral position.¹⁶ The employment of paradox destabilizes the Corinthians' confidence in their own conceptions of wisdom.

1.3 The position of the quotations

In this paragraph we consider the quoted segments in the letter's context. Their original context will be the subject of discussion in the next section.

The verses 1:19–20 have the appearance of a unit in several respects. The formula "it is written" introduces the explicit quotation in 1:19, but covers to some extent the Scriptural language of 1:20 as well. We first note that if these verses 19–20 are left out, the text can still be read as a continuum:

18a For the word of the cross is *foolishness* to those who are on the way to destruction,
 18b but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.
 1:21a For since in the wisdom of God the world by its wisdom did not know him,
 1:21b God was pleased by the *foolishness* of what is preached to save those who believe.

The lack of understanding in verse 18a corresponds with the lack of knowledge in 21a, the salvation in 18b returns in 21b. The term 'foolishness' in the first line of v.18 returns in the second line of v.21. The word of the cross is despised as 'foolishness' in 18a but heralded as the means of salvation in verse 21b. 'Foolishness' is made into an honourable nickname. This semantic shift is more apparent when the quotations are omitted.

Yet, the inclusion of verses 19–20 does not diminish the power of expression of 1:18–25. Instead, these verses give the text bite. The quotations pile up respectable titles such as 'wise,' 'discerning,' 'scribe,' and 'philosopher,' and in the same breath expose the hollowness of these terms. Vigorous language is introduced with 'destroy,' 'cast aside,' and 'make foolish':

¹² Conzelmann 69: "eine zeitlose Regel über das Verhältnis von göttlicher und menschlicher Potenz."

¹³ Schrage 190: "Das Kreuz ist kein Paradigma für eine allgemeine Regel."

¹⁴ Zerwick §140 notes that Paul uses the neuter adjective with the article in a sense that corresponds with the abstract substantive and that "the Vulgate is right in rendering, not 'stultitia' and 'infirmitas' but concretely 'quod stultum est Dei,' 'quod infirmum est Dei.'"

¹⁵ Barrett 56.

¹⁶ Cf. Merklein 177.

1:19 For it is written, “I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,
and the cleverness of the clever I will set aside.”

1:20 Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the philosopher¹⁷ of this age?
Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?

The assertions in verses 19–20 are much bolder than those in 18 and 21 because they discredit the wisdom *of the wise*. The language of the quoted segments is offensive for anyone who considers himself wise. Especially the phrase “I will destroy” in LXX and NT is very harsh.¹⁸ Its radical language belongs to prophetic discourse. The first person divine speech (v.19) and the short provocative questions (v.20) stand in contrast with the long sentences of the context. The context’s deliberative genre manifests itself in antitheses and the frequent use of γάρ (17, 18, 21) and ἐπειδὴ (21, 22). The text presents a case in 1:18 and 1:21–31, while the prophetic words provoke an audience in 1:19–20. The change in genre warrants us to speak of quotation thresholds after verse 18 and before verse 21.

2. Scripture

2.1 The Quotation in 1 Cor 1:19

In the new context the quotation in 1 Cor 1:19 occupies an important position because it follows immediately after the *propositio* in 1:18. The conjunction ‘for’ at the beginning of the formula “for it is written,” indicates that the citation supports the *propositio*. The citation derives from Isa 29:14 where it forms part of the pericope 29:9–16. In this section we will consider 29:14b in its original context. LXX Isaiah 29:9–24 consists of two parts. The first part (29:9–16) condemns the behaviour of the religious and political leaders and pronounces judgment on them. The second part (29:17–24) is a message of salvation.

The pericope 29:9–16 begins with a segment describing judgment in the form of drunkenness (9–10a) and blindness (10b). These metaphors express that the leaders are in a state that makes them unable to perceive things of decisive importance.¹⁹ The theme of drunkenness in verse 9 resumes the prophet’s words in chapter LXX Isa 28:1–8.²⁰ This drunkenness receives a spiritual character in Isa 28:1 LXX (“those who are drunk without wine”) and in Isa 29:9 (MT and LXX). That which Judah receives to drink in verse 10a is

¹⁷ The translation ‘philosopher’ (NIV; cf. Wendland 17 and Lietzmann 9: ‘Forscher’; Lindemann 45; Voss, *Wort*, 71; Kammler, *Kreuz*, 74–76; Schnabel 121) is better than ‘debater’ (RSV, NRSV, NASB, ‘subtle debater’ NEB). See M. Lautenschlager, “Abschied vom Disputierer. Zur Bedeutung von συζητητής in 1 Kor 1,20,” *ZNW* 83 (1992) 276–85.

¹⁸ The LXX differs from the MT, “the wisdom of the wise will perish (or: ‘be lost’).” See the discussion of this change in the next section on Isa 29:14b.

¹⁹ The same language and ideas occur in Isa 6:9–10. In fact, there is no other passage in Isaiah than 29:9–10 that expresses more clearly the idea of Isa 6:9–10 (C.A. Evans, *To See and Not Perceive. Isaiah 6:9–10 in Early Jewish and Christian Interpretation* [Sheffield: Academic Press, 1989] 43).

²⁰ Isa 28:1, 3, 7–8, e.g. ἱερεὺς καὶ προφήτης ἐξέστησαν (cf. 29:9) διὰ τὸν οἶνον (28:7).

‘a spirit of deep sleep’ (πνεῦμα κατανύξεως) and the physical inability of a drunkard to walk straight becomes a picture of a spiritual loss of direction. The text continues as follows:

Isa 29:11-12

LXX Isa 29:11-12

11 καὶ ἔσονται ὑμῖν πάντα τὰ ῥήματα
ταῦτα ὡς οἱ λόγοι τοῦ βιβλίου τοῦ
ἐσφραγισμένου τούτου, ὃ ἐὰν δῶσιν αὐτὸ
ἄνθρωπῳ ἐπισταμένῳ γράμματα
λέγοντες Ἀνάγνωθι ταῦτα·
καὶ ἐρεῖ Οὐ δύναμαι ἀναγνῶναι,
ἐσφράγισται γάρ.
12 καὶ δοθήσεται τὸ βιβλίον τοῦτο εἰς
χεῖρας ἀνθρώπου μὴ ἐπισταμένου
γράμματα,
καὶ ἐρεῖ αὐτῷ Ἀνάγνωθι τοῦτο·
καὶ ἐρεῖ Οὐκ ἐπίσταμαι γράμματα.

MT Isa 29:11-12

11 תְּהִי לָכֶם חֲזוֹן הַכֹּל
כְּדִבְרֵי הַסֵּפֶר הַחֲתוּם
אֲשֶׁר־יִתְּנוּ אֹתוֹ
אֶל־יֹדֵעַ הַסֵּפֶר
לֵאמֹר קְרָא נָא־זֶה
וְאָמַר לֹא אוּכַל כִּי חֲתוּם הוּא׃

וְנָתַן הַסֵּפֶר
עַל אִשֶּׁר לֹא־יֹדֵעַ סֵּפֶר
לֵאמֹר קְרָא נָא־זֶה
וְאָמַר לֹא יִדְעֵתִי סֵפֶר

11. And all these sayings shall become for you like the words of this sealed book. If they give it to a learned man, saying, “Read these things,” then he will say, “I cannot read it, for it is sealed.”

12. And this book will be given into the hands of an unlearned man, and one will say to him, “read this,” and he will say, “I am not learned.”

11. The vision of all this has become for you like the words of a sealed document. If it is given to those who can read, with the command, “Read this,” they say, “We cannot, for it is sealed,”

12. And if it is given to those who cannot read, saying, “Read this,” they say, “We cannot read.”

According to A. Demsky, together with the Lachish letters 3,²¹ Isa 29:11-12 with **ידע ספר** is the only ancient Hebrew reference to literacy. These places “specifically refer to the knowledge of reading and not to the active aspect of writing and composition.”²² In the Septuagint, both aspects are involved and μὴ ἐπιστάμενος γράμματα (29:12) was the common expression in Hellenistic Egypt to refer to an illiterate person, one who is not able to read or write.²³ Conversely, 29:11 refers to the literate person. By including both reading *and* writing, the Septuagint envisions the abilities of a scribe. This supports the

²¹ Its author apparently disdains the suggestion that he is not able to read a letter from his master: “And as for what my lord said, “Dost thou not understand? – call a scribe!” as Yahweh liveth no one hath ever undertaken to call a scribe for me” (ANET 322).

²² A. Demsky, “Writing in Ancient Israel and Early Judaism. Part One: The Biblical Period,” in *Mikra*, 12.

²³ J. Ziegler, *Untersuchungen*, 176-7. Accordingly, LXX-D translates, “dan wird er sagen: ‘Ich kann nicht lesen und schreiben’” (29:12).

suggestion made by Wilk that Paul brings Isa 29:11 to bear on his question ποῦ γραμματεὺς in 1 Cor 1:20.²⁴

Syntactically the verses 29:11–12 seem to function as a parenthesis within the poetic passage 29:9–16 because of their prose form. These verses add the more specific activity of reading to that of seeing in 9–10. Verses 11–12 give a particular focus to the problem of understanding in the book of Isaiah. There is not only a failure to comprehend through hearing and seeing (Isa 6:9–10; 29:10), but also through reading the words. The advantage of written prophecies beyond spoken ones is that when readers do not understand or believe at one time, they may understand in the future. The book form keeps the message of the prophet for generations to come. Thus, in Isa 8:16–18 and 30:8 the explicit purpose of committing prophecies to writing is to preserve them so that their truth would be evident in the future.²⁵ The phrase πάντα τὰ ῥήματα ταῦτα in the LXX does not just relate to the immediate context but refers to other prophecies in the book, because prophecies are individually called ῥήμα (e.g. 8:20; 14:28; 15:1).

The verb ‘to seal’ (σφραγίζω) occurs in LXX Isaiah only in 29:11 and in 8:16,²⁶ and exclusively in 29:11 do we encounter the metaphor of a sealed *book*.²⁷ A seal makes a document inviolable; no one can open it unauthorized or before its time.²⁸ It is remarkable that in the latter part of the chapter 29:18 says, “the deaf will hear the words of a book *on that day*” (MT, LXX²⁹). This suggests that the sealed book of 29:11 can be read when the time has come. The sealing in 29:11 together with a disclosure ‘on that day’ in 29:18 give Isa 29:9–24 an eschatological flavor. The future tenses καμμύσει (29:10) and ἔσονται (29:11) in the Septuagint seem to understand the sealing and the inability to perceive as future events. The Septuagint tends to intensify the eschatological aspect of the Hebrew Isaiah.³⁰

J. Blenkinsopp notes that it would be “imprudent not to consider the possibility that there exists a connection of some kind between the sealed book of Isa 29:11–12 and later apocalyptic references to such books, especially since the thrust towards the

²⁴ Wilk, *Bedeutung*, 247.

²⁵ J. Jeremias, “Das Wesen der alttestamentlichen Prophetie,” *TLZ* 131 (2006) 6, 8. Isa 30:8 says νῦν οὖν καθίσας γράψον ἐπὶ πυξίου ταῦτα καὶ εἰς βιβλίον, ὅτι ἔσται εἰς ἡμέρας καιρῶν ταῦτα καὶ ἔως εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα. This idea of (future) confirmation of the spoken word is also expressed in 44:26: καὶ ἰστών ῥήματα παιδὸς αὐτοῦ καὶ τὴν βουλὴν τῶν ἀγγέλων αὐτοῦ ἀληθεύων.

²⁶ The Hebrew of 8:16 speaks of sealing the teaching among the prophet’s disciples. Cf. by way of contrast the prohibition to seal a prophet’s words at the end of John’s Apocalypse: Μὴ σφραγίσῃς τοὺς λόγους τῆς προφητείας τοῦ βιβλίου τούτου, ὁ καιρὸς γὰρ ἐγγύς ἐστιν (Rev 22:10, cf. G. Fitzer, “σφραγίς κτλ,” *TWNT* 7:950).

²⁷ The term βιβλίον occurs three times in this chapter (29:11, 12, 18) and four times elsewhere in Isaiah: 30:8 (also as book), in 4:4 (skies compares to a scroll), 37:14 (a letter), and 50:1 (bill of divorce).

²⁸ Fitzer, *TWNT* 7:945.

²⁹ καὶ ἀκούσονται ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ κωφοὶ λόγους βιβλίου.

³⁰ E.g. by interpreting the local adverbial expression ‘from afar’ (כִּי-חָרָב) in Isa 30:27 and 49:1 in a temporal sense: ‘after a long time’ (διὰ πολλοῦ χρόνου) Cf. A. van der Kooij, “Zur Theologie des Jesajabuches in der Septuaginta,” in *Theologische Probleme der Septuaginta und der hellenistischen Hermeneutik* (ed. H. G. Reventlow; Gütersloh: Kaiser, 1997) 16.

apocalyptic worldview is in evidence throughout the book of Isaiah.”³¹ Among biblical texts only Isaiah and Daniel mention sealed prophetic books, cf. Dan (MT) 8:26, 9:24, and 12:4, 9.³² Daniel has to keep the book sealed till the time of the end (12:4, 9). At that time, “none of the wicked shall understand, but those who are wise shall understand” (12:10, **יבינו** MT, οἱ νοήμονες συνήσουσιν Theod). In the eschatological situation of Daniel 12:10 the book is no longer sealed, so that understanding is made available.

Isa 29:13

LXX Isa 29:13

13 Καὶ εἶπεν κύριος Ἐγγίξει μοι ὁ λαὸς
οὗτος τοῖς χεῖλεσιν αὐτῶν τιμῶσίν με,
ἡ δὲ καρδία αὐτῶν πόρρω ἀπέχει ἀπ’
ἐμοῦ, μάτην δὲ σέβονται με
διδάσκοντες ἐντάλματα ἀνθρώπων
καὶ διδασκαλίας.

13 The Lord said: These people draw near
me;
they honor me with their lips,
while their heart is far from me,
and in vain they worship me,
teaching human precepts and teachings.

MT Isa 29:13

וַיֹּאמֶר אֲדֹנָי יֵעָן כִּי נִגַּשׁ הָעָם הַזֶּה בִּפְיוֹ
וּבשִׁפְתָיו כְּבָדוֹנִי
וְלִבּוֹ רָחֹק מִמֶּנִּי
וְתִהְיֶי יִרְאַתָּם אֵתִי
מִצְוֹת אֲנָשִׁים
מִלְמָדָה:

13 The Lord said: Because these people
draw near with their mouths and honor me
with their lips, while their hearts are far
from me,
and their worship of me is a human
commandment learned by rote;

The criticism of cultic formalism in 29:13 is comparable to that in 1:10–15. But while Isa 1 condemns temple worship without social justice, 29:13 castigates outer worship without inner commitment (cf. ‘with their lips’) and without divine sanction (‘human precepts’). The result is, as Isa 29:13 LXX reads, μάτην δὲ σέβονται με.³³ The verb σέβομαι accords better with Greek sensibilities than φοβέομαι and functions from the prophetic books in the LXX onwards as a term for cultic worship.³⁴ The adverb μάτην is found 5 times in Isaiah (3 times in Isa 28–33), a significant number in comparison with the other books of the LXX.³⁵ In four of the five cases μάτην lacks a clearly corresponding word in the Hebrew, which suggests that the translator has a preference for its use. This preference is still more evident in the case of the related adjective ματαίος occurring 18

³¹ J. Blenkinsopp, *Opening the Sealed Book: Interpretations of the book of Isaiah in Late Antiquity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006) 14.

³² Blenkinsopp, *Sealed Book*, 14.

³³ This differs slightly from MT (“their worship of me”) and LXX apparently read וְתִהְיֶי instead of וְתִהְיֶי (MT).

³⁴ F. Siegert, *Zwischen Hebräischer Bibel und Altem Testament. Eine Einführung in die Septuaginta* (Münster: Lit, 2001) 233.

³⁵ 23 times. In the NT μάτην features only in Mark 7:7 and Matt 15:9, being quotations of Isa 29:13.

times in LXX Isa, of which 11 times in Isa 28–33; the majority (6) of these 11 occurrences have no apparent equivalent in the Hebrew.

Empty worship is accompanied by “teaching human precepts and teachings.” The word διδασκαλία may mean ‘teaching’ or ‘instruction,’ but also ‘rehearsing’ or ‘training.’³⁶ The latter rendition comes close to the thought of 13a (“while their heart is far from me”) with the suggestion of mindless repetition. This understanding of the Greek also agrees with the MT מִלְמָדָה, “learned by rote” (NRSV).³⁷ The noun διδασκαλία occurs only in 29:13 in LXX Isaiah and has a negative value just like διδάσκω in this verse and in 9:15 (“the prophet who teaches lawless things”).³⁸ Significant is the qualification of the ‘precepts’ in 13b with the genitive ἀνθρώπων.³⁹ The primary indictment against the people is that they have followed traditions which are man-made.⁴⁰ The prophetic complaint is not so much against the fact that the precepts are unjust (as in 10:1, οὐαὶ τοῖς γράφουσιν πονηρίαν), but that human teachings have taken the place of divine instruction.

The book of Isaiah has a positive view of religious and moral instruction and the Hebrew Isaiah is not reluctant to use the expression ‘law of God’ in a positive manner.⁴¹ Moreover, it relates the term תּוֹרָה to the field of wisdom.⁴² The book does not keep the law of the Lord and his counsel or wisdom apart as two unconnected areas. The wise not only discard the *counsel* of the Lord (30:1; 31:1), they also partake in the people’s attitude of not wanting to hear the *law* of the Lord (30:9). The text does not separate Gods law (30:9) from Gods counsel (30:1) but severs divine instruction from human precepts (29:13) and the wisdom of the wise (29:14). The wisdom of the wise in v.14 belongs to the same category as the human precepts in v.13. This wisdom and these precepts have established themselves as alternatives to the counsel and the law of the Lord.

LXX Isaiah accords even more importance to ‘law’ than the Hebrew text does.⁴³ Its concept of νόμος cannot be restricted to priestly teaching because parallel expressions

³⁶ LSJ s.v.

³⁷ Cf. W.A.M. Beuken, *Isaiah 28–39* (Leuven: Peeters, 2000) 99: “The fundamental meaning of the verb לָמַד is evident here: ‘to drill, to impose something from the outside by way of habituation, discipline or negative experience’” (e.g. Judg 3:31 ‘ox-goad,’ MT Jer 9:19 ‘teach [a dirge]’).

³⁸ Elsewhere διδάσκω occurs only in 55:12 (in a positive sense).

³⁹ “The negative connotation of the term ‘human’ is apropos within Isaian vocabulary (אַנְשִׁים: 2:11, 17; 5:22; 7:13)” (Beuken, *Isaiah 28–39*, 99).

⁴⁰ This is also the aspect which is emphasized when this verse is quoted in Matt 15:8,9 and Mk 7:6,7 with the comment added (v.8): ἀφέντες τὴν ἐντολὴν τοῦ θεοῦ κρατεῖτε τὴν παράδοσιν τῶν ἀνθρώπων.

⁴¹ H. Wildberger, *Jesaja* (Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 1965) 36–7 on MT Isaiah’s use of תּוֹרָה. Cf. e.g. 2:3 and 42:4.

⁴² Jensen even argues that Isaiah uses תּוֹרָה-terminology in his polemic against the wise, because it was their duty to give instruction from the Lord and they have not done so (J. Jensen, *The Use of Tora by Isaiah. His Debate with the Wisdom Tradition* (Washington: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1973).

⁴³ Van der Kooij, “Theologie,” 13–5.

show that the term is consonant with the prophetic word.⁴⁴ This νόμος is considered to be a valuable gift from God (8:20),⁴⁵ and the text polemicizes against “those who seal up this law so that they might not learn” (8:16). They are called ἄνομοι (9:17) who practice ἀνομία (9:18). Isa 9:15 speaks of a prophet who teaches lawless things (προφήτην διδάσκοντα ἄνομα).⁴⁶ This teaching against the law leads the people astray.⁴⁷

Isa 29:14a

LXX Isa 29:14

14 διὰ τοῦτο ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ προσθήσω
τοῦ μεταθεῖναι τὸν λαὸν τοῦτον
καὶ μεταθήσω αὐτούς

14 Therefore look, I will proceed
to remove this people,
I will remove them.

MT Isa 29:14

לִכְן הִנְנִי יוֹסֵף
לְהַפְלִיא אֶת־הָעַם־הַזֶּה
הַפְלֵא וּפְלֵא

14 So I will again do
amazing things with this people, shocking
and amazing.

The divine action announced in 29:14 is a response to the people's actions in 29:13 and the words διὰ τοῦτο link 29:14 to what precedes.⁴⁸ The Greek demonstrative particle ἰδοὺ almost always translates the Hebrew הִנֵּה that “serves to introduce a solemn or important declaration” (BDB s.v.). It happens frequently in the book of Isaiah that a sentence opens with ἰδοὺ, in particular to announce new divine action.⁴⁹ From the perspective of the wider context, the opening words remind the reader of Isa 28:16 because διὰ τοῦτο ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ (29:14) resembles the opening phrase of Isa 28:16, διὰ τοῦτο (οὕτως λέγει κύριος) ἰδοὺ ἐγώ.⁵⁰

The call for attention is in both verses followed by divine speech in the future tense: ἐμβαλῶ in 28:16 and προσθήσω and ἀπολῶ in 29:14.⁵¹ These verses do not only

⁴⁴ Νόμος θεοῦ is parallel with λόγος κυρίου in 1:10, 2:3, with λόγιον of God in 5:24, and with the message of the prophets in 30:9-10; Cf. also the positive use of ‘the law of God’ in 33:6, 42:24; 51:4,7.

⁴⁵ LXX Isa 8:20 says that the law is given for help or life support (νόμον γὰρ εἰς βοήθειαν ἔδωκεν).

⁴⁶ Cf. LXX Jer 23:13, 32 also directed against the prophets who ἐπλάνησαν τὸν λαόν μου ἐν τοῖς ψεύδεσιν αὐτῶν καὶ ἐν τοῖς πλάνοις αὐτῶν.

⁴⁷ “And those who congratulate this people will lead them astray, and they lead them astray in order to devour them” (9:15, καὶ ἔσονται οἱ μακαρίζοντες τὸν λαὸν τοῦτον πλανῶντες καὶ πλανῶσιν ὅπως καταπίωσιν αὐτούς).

⁴⁸ In the MT לִכְן in 29:14 resumes כִּי יַעַן at the beginning of 29:13, so that in MT these two verses stand in a relationship of cause and effect.

⁴⁹ O. Procksch, *Jesaja I* (Leipzig: Scholl, 1930) 357; Siegert, *Bibel*, 163, considers the frequent use in the LXX of the particle ἰδοὺ to be a Hebraism.

⁵⁰ MT: לִכְן הִנְנִי (29:14) and כֹּה אֶמַר יְהוָה הִנְנִי (28:16).

⁵¹ MT in 29:14 reads the form יוֹסֵף as a Hiphil יוֹסֵף but the reading as a participle יוֹסֵף is to be preferred (Procksch, *Jesaja I*, 378; Wildberger, *Jesaja*, 1118). For the parallel construction in 28:16

agree in form but they also share a context which speaks of men striving to keep plans secret: in 28:15 the rulers of Jerusalem reassure themselves by saying “we have made a covenant with Hades” and 29:15 reproaches “those who make plans in secret.” Therefore, God’s action in 28:16 and 29:14 stands in contrast with the secretive actions of Judah’s political leaders. In 28:16 the promised divine action consists in the laying of a foundation stone (ἐμβάλῳ εἰς τὰ θεμέλια Σιων λίθον), which is a positive act of providing support because the text promises ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ’ αὐτῷ οὐ μὴ κατασχυνηθῇ.⁵² The significance of the action announced in 29:14 (προσθήσω τοῦ μεταθεῖναι τὸν λαὸν τοῦτον) is less clear. The future προσθήσω (‘I will proceed’ or ‘continue’) relates verse 14 not only to verse 19 but also to the actions of God mentioned in chapters 28 and 29, such as the alien tongue (28:11), the strange work (28:21), and the wonders in 28:29.⁵³

The meaning of the next verb in 29:14, μετατίθημι, requires discussion. The verb occurs 18 times in the Septuagint, of which 4 times in the Later Prophets. Three of these instances are found in Isa 29 (14 [twice], 17). When we look at the Septuagint two basic meanings of μετατίθημι can be distinguished.⁵⁴ The first is ‘to move’ or ‘to remove’ in a physical sense. In this way the verb is used for moving boundaries between farmers’ fields (Deut 27:17, Prov 23:10, Hos 5:10) and for mountains being moved into the seas (Ψ 45:2). A specific case is Enoch in Gen 5:24 of whom we read that “he was not found, because God transferred him” (ὅτι μετέθηκεν αὐτὸν ὁ θεός).⁵⁵ This motif of Enoch’s removal returns in Wis 4:10 and Sir 44:16 (μετετέθη, also in the New Testament: Heb 11:5), and Sir 49:14 (μετετέθη ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς). In line with this meaning, NETS translates μετατίθημι in Isa 29:14 with ‘to remove.’⁵⁶ In this case, with removal the LXX-translator probably thought of the people’s journey into exile, a few centuries before his time. But against this translation one may object that nowhere else the exile is described with the verb μετατίθημι.⁵⁷ While NETS has ‘to remove’ for μετατίθημι in v.14, it chooses ‘to change’ in v.17 but is ‘to change’ not the best option in v.14 as well?

Thus, the second meaning is ‘to turn’ or ‘change.’ In this way μετατίθημι may be used intransitively for a young man turning from (with ἀπό)⁵⁸ the ancestral ways (2 Macc 7:24) or for a friend who turns towards enmity (Sir 6:9, φίλος μετατιθέμενος εἰς

MT יהוה יסד there are also strong reasons to vocalize as a participle יסד (Procksch, *Jesaja I*, 357). The context suggests that YHWH is going to lay a new foundation stone.

⁵² By way of contrast, the other Isaiah stone text, 8:14–15, is a prophecy of judgment, both in MT and LXX (Van der Kooij, “Isaiah in the Septuagint,” 519–28). The two Isaiah stone texts are combined in the New Testament (in Rom 9:33 and 1 Pet 2:6–8) to indicate the twofold reaction to the Messiah, one of reception and one of rejection.

⁵³ B. Duhm, *Das Buch Jesaja* (5th ed.; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1968) 211.

⁵⁴ Cf. GELS, s.v.: 1. to shift from one place to another, 2. to change the nature of.

⁵⁵ Instead of referring to a change of place, Philo (*Abr.* 17–19) takes μετέθηκεν in Gen 5:24 in a moral sense: so that Enoch left his old and began his new life; “he passes across from ignorance to instruction, from folly to sound sense,” (*Abr.* 24).

⁵⁶ Likewise LEH.

⁵⁷ A comparable construction with μετοικίζω occurs in Jd 2:3 Οὐ προσθήσω τοῦ μετοικίσει τὸν λαόν, referring to the inhabitants of Canaan.

⁵⁸ Cf. Gal 1:6, μετατίθεσθε ἀπὸ τοῦ καλέσαντος ὑμᾶς.

ἔχθραν).⁵⁹ When the verb is transitive, it means ‘to convert’ a person or to make someone ‘change his mind.’ In 2 Macc 4:46 Ptolemy induced the king to change his mind (τὸν βασιλέα μετέθηκεν). According to 3 Kgdms 20:25 queen Jezebel ‘perverted’ Ahab (μετέθηκεν αὐτόν) and in Es 4:17^s Esther prays that God will change the heart of the king (μεταθές τὴν καρδίαν αὐτοῦ).

In Isa 29:17 (οὐκέτι μικρὸν καὶ μετατεθήσεται MT [MT, וְשָׁב] ὁ Λίβανος ὡς τὸ ὄρος τὸ Χερμελ) “like Mount Chermel” indicates a positive change in the realm of creation, a major renewal of the environment. This announcement is followed by a renewal of the people in 29:18–19. Does this meaning also apply in the case of 29:14? LXX-D translates in both 29:14 and 17 ‘*umwandeln*’ and gives 29:13–24 the caption ‘*Die Verwandlung des Volkes*.’ This is indeed the best understanding of the rather obscure μετατίθημι in 29:14. We only need to become a little more specific with regard to the nature of this ‘*umwandeln*’ or ‘change.’ It is possible to interpret this change as a reversal of roles within the people of Israel as also exemplified in 29:18–21.⁶⁰ However, the most natural understanding of μετατίθημι in the sense of ‘to change’ in the construction προσθήσω τοῦ μεταθεῖναι τὸν λαὸν τοῦτον καὶ μεταθήσω αὐτούς seems to be that of causing a conversion or creating a change of mind.

Isa 29:14b

LXX Isa 29:14b

καὶ ἀπολῶ τὴν σοφίαν τῶν σοφῶν
καὶ τὴν σύνεσιν τῶν συνετῶν κρύψω.

and I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,
and the discernment of the discerning I
will hide.

MT Isa 29:14b

וְאַבְדָּה חֵכְמַת חֲכָמִים
וּבִינַת נְבִנָיו תִּסְתָּר

The wisdom of their wise shall perish,
and the discernment of the discerning shall
be hidden.

The shift in the meaning of the first verb is substantial. According to MT, “the wisdom of the wise perishes,” but according to the LXX God destroys the wisdom of the wise. This shift can be explained on grammatical grounds. In 29:14b the Septuagint continues with first person language and thereby attributes the bankruptcy of the wise directly to God. Here we witness a recurring practice of the LXX Isa-translator, called ‘personalization’ by D.A. Baer.⁶¹ In this verse this tendency concurs with the habit of the Greek writer to

⁵⁹ Cf. LSJ s.v. II.4: μεταθέμενος (‘turn-coat’) used for “Dionysius of Heraclea, who went over from the Stoics to the Cyrenaics” (D.L. 7.37, 166).

⁶⁰ Wilk, *Bedeutung*, 248: Paul links the reversal within Israel in Isa 29:14 with “die in Christus geschehene ‘Umkehrung der Verhältnisse’” in 1 Cor 1:20–29.

⁶¹ D.A. Baer, *When We All Go Home. Translation and Theology in LXX Isaiah 56–66* (Sheffield: Academic Press, 2001) 53 uses the term ‘personalization’ to indicate “the substitution of first- and second-person grammatical forms for third-person forms” and sees this procedure as part of the homiletical contemporizing intention of the translator. Baer notes “roughly two hundred cases,” while the opposite phenomenon (from Hebrew first and second person to Greek third person forms) occurs “only half as often” (59).

bring the subject of a sentence in conformity with the subject of the immediate context.⁶² LXX Isa 29:14b is a direct continuation of 14a.

From a semantic perspective, the LXX-translator's choice departs in a significant way from the Hebrew. While the Piel and especially the Hifil of **אבד** may carry the meaning 'destroy,' the Qal of the verb signifies 'perish,' 'vanish' or 'be lost.'⁶³ **אבד** Qal may have abstract words as subject, e.g. 'memory' (Job 18:17), 'name' (Ps 41:6), 'vigour' (Job 30:2), 'courage' (Jer 4:9), 'trust' (Jer 7:28), and 'instruction' (Jer 18:18; Ezek 7:26). To this category also belong 'plans' (Ps 146:4) and 'wisdom' (Jer 18:18; 49:7).⁶⁴ In every case the meaning of the accompanying verb **אבד** Qal is 'perish,' 'vanish' or 'be lost.' With abstract nouns as subject, the Septuagint-translators, therefore, render the Hebrew verb intransitively by using the middle voice of ἀπόλλυμι (cf. LXX Jer 18:18). Here, however, the choice of the first person active ἀπολῶ τὴν σοφίαν τῶν σοφῶν of LXX Isa 29:14b causes a significant change in sense. This makes the question relevant whether Paul was aware of the Hebrew text of Isa 29:14. The least we can say is that he did not stress the active ἀπολῶ: 1 Cor 1 does not claim that wisdom has been abolished or destroyed. The sense 1 Cor 1:18–25 conveys is that the wisdom of the wise is helpless, vain and empty when it comes face to face with the cross. It has nothing to say so that the text continues naturally with the challenge, "where is the wise man?"

The MT has the verb 'to hide' (**תַּסְתֵּר**, **סתר** Hitp) in the second line that says "the discernment of the discerning will be hidden." Its sense corresponds with that of the preceding **אֶבְדָּהּ** because both refer to a disappearing from sight, to being lost, so that wisdom or discernment are no longer available. The wise and discerning have lost the capacity that gave them their name, that which was their pride. The idea that wisdom is hidden occurs elsewhere, e.g. in Job 28: 20–21,⁶⁵ where we read in verse 21 "It has escaped notice by any human (LXX πάντα ἄνθρωπον) and it was hidden (LXX ἐκρύβη)"⁶⁶ from birds in the air." The outcome of Job 28 is that only God knows where and what wisdom is (28:23–28). In the near context Isa 29:14 resumes the language of LXX Isa 29:10, where it says that the leaders of the nation are "the ones who see hidden things."

While LXX Isa 29:14a and 14b exhibit a unity based on the coordination of four main verbs, in the MT verse 14b appears to be a result or a consequence of 14a: the wisdom of the wise perishes (14b) because of a new divine initiative (14a). After **הִנְנִי** assembles an audience for God's action in 14a, in 14b this audience turns out to lack all wisdom to understand and appreciate this action. The perishing of the wisdom of the

⁶² Cf. Baer, *Translation*, 59. In 19:13–14a MT the word of the Lord is presented as a first person speech but in 29:14b a shift toward the third person takes place. The LXX, however, continues the first person future forms of 14a (προσθήσω and μεταθήσω) with ἀπολῶ and κρύψω in 14b.

⁶³ Cf. BDB, s.v.; only if an agent is clearly implied one might render, in the case of people or material things, 'be exterminated' or 'be destroyed.'

⁶⁴ B. Otzen, "אבד," *TWAT* 1:23–4, "Das Verbum beschreibt, wie in kritischen Zeiten, wenn die Bosheit wächst, gute Eigenschaften und positive Begriffe schwinden."

⁶⁵ LXX Job 28:20 ἡ δὲ σοφία πόθεν εὗρέθη; ποῖος δὲ τόπος ἐστὶν τῆς συνέσεως; as in Isa 29:14, σοφία (MT **חָכְמָה**) stands in parallel with σύνεσις (MT **בִּינָה**).

⁶⁶ MT **נִסְתָּרָה**.

wise expresses political-intellectual helplessness. All their wisdom has fled now they witness Gods action.

Another difference between LXX and MT is that the Hebrew speaks of “the wisdom of *their* wise men and the discernment of *their* discerning ones” whereby the possessive pronoun refers to the people of Judah, named ‘this people’ (MT and LXX) in 29:14a. The Septuagint, however, has no possessive personal pronoun and this appears to give the statement a general character. Nevertheless, ‘the wise’ and ‘the discerning’ remain embedded in the context of ‘this people’ (13 and 14a). In LXX Isaiah σοφοί and συνετοί are near synonyms. Σοφός is the common equivalent of the Hebrew חָכָם (in Isa 3:3; 19:11-12; 29:14; 31:2), but συνετός appears for חָכָם in two cases (Isa 5:21; 19:11; cf. Jer 9:12; 18:18; 27:35).

Isa 29:15-16

LXX Isa 29:15-16

15 οὐαὶ οἱ βαθέως βουλήν ποιοῦντες
καὶ οὐ διὰ κυρίου·
οὐαὶ οἱ ἐν κρυφῇ βουλήν ποιοῦντες
καὶ ἔσται ἐν σκότει τὰ ἔργα αὐτῶν
καὶ ἐροῦσιν Τίς ἡμᾶς ἐώρακεν
καὶ τίς ἡμᾶς γνώσεται ἢ ἃ ἡμεῖς
ποιοῦμεν;
16 οὐχ ὥς ὁ πηλὸς τοῦ κεραμέως
λογισθήσεσθε;
μὴ ἐρεῖ τὸ πλάσμα τῷ πλάσαντι
Οὐ σύ με ἔπλασας;
ἢ τὸ ποίημα τῷ ποιήσαντι
Οὐ συνετῶς με ἐποίησας;

15 Ah, those who make plans deeply
and not through the Lord!
Ah, those who make plans in secret,
and their works will be in darkness!
And they will say, “Who has seen us,
and who will know us or the things we
do?”
16 Shall you not be regarded as the potter’s
clay?
Shall the thing formed say to the one who
formed it, “You did not form me,”
or the thing made to the one who made it,
“You made me with no understanding”?

MT Isa 29:15-16

15 הוי המַעֲמִיקִים
מִיָּהוָה
לְסִתֵּר עֵצָה
וְהָיָה בְּמַחְשֵׁךְ מַעֲשֵׂיהֶם
וַיֹּאמְרוּ מִי רָאָנוּ
וּמִי יוֹדֵעֵנוּ:
16 הַפְּכֶכֶם אֶם-בְּחֶמֶר הַיֵּצֵר
יִחָשֵׁב
כִּי-יֹאמַר מַעֲשֵׂה לְעֹשֵׂהוּ
לֹא עָשֵׂנִי
וַיֵּצֵר אֹמַר לְיוֹצְרוֹ
לֹא הִבִּין:

15 Ha! You who hide a plan too deep for
the Lord,
whose deeds are in the dark,
and who say, “Who sees us?
Who knows us?”
16 You turn things upside down!
Shall the potter be regarded as the clay?
Shall the thing made say to its maker,
“You did not make me”;
or the thing formed say of the one who
formed it, “He has no understanding”?

In MT 29:15 הוי stands only at the beginning of the verse but in the LXX οὐαὶ returns as the first word of the second line. This differentiates the woe-exclamation in LXX 29:15

from the introductory woe-exclamations in 28:1, 29:1, 30:1, 31:1, and 33:1.⁶⁷ There is, therefore, little reason to regard verse 15 as the beginning of a new pericope. Furthermore, a shared vocabulary also suggests that 15-16 belongs to the pericope 29:9-16. Words of the same root that return are ἐν κρυφῇ (15), echoing κρύψω (14) and τὰ κρυπτὰ (10), and συνετῶς (16) resuming σύνεσις and συνετῶν (14).⁶⁸

There is a continuity of language and thought between 29:14 and 15-16. The woe-declarations, “Ah, those who make plans deeply,” and “ah, those who make plans in secret,” (v.15), repeat in a different form the announcement of destruction of the wisdom of the wise in verse 14. The ones ‘who make plans’ in verse 15 stand in parallel with ‘the wise’ and ‘understanding’ in verse 14. The Septuagint employs the idea of ‘plan’ (MT **תַּחֲשֹׁבֶת**, LXX βουλή) even more frequently than the Hebrew text of Isaiah does. This is visible on a small scale in Isa 29:15 by its double use of the word βουλή, while MT has its equivalent **תַּחֲשֹׁבֶת** only once. Both MT and LXX often mention the plans of peoples (8:9-10), of Moab (16:3), of Egypt (19:3, 11), of Judah (29:15, 30:1, and 36:5), and of Babylon (44:25; 47:13). Besides these references to human plans, God’s plan or plans feature in 4:2 LXX; 5:19; 14:26; 19:17; 25:1; 25:7 LXX; 28:29; 46:10.

Isa 55:8 presents a contrast between God’s plans and man’s plans: “for my plans are not like your plans” (οὐ γάρ εἰσιν αἱ βουλαί μου ὥσπερ αἱ βουλαί ὑμῶν). This distinction is significant for the main focus of the prophet’s criticism is the people’s refusal to listen to the Lord in the plans they make. Isa 29:15 speaks of those who devise plans but “not through the Lord” (οὐ διὰ κυρίου). This failure is repeated in 30:1: “You make a plan not through me” (ἐποιήσατε βουλήν οὐ δι’ ἐμοῦ). This way of making plans can only meet with condemnation, as expressed in the wider context: “A curse will devour their counsel” (28:8 LXX), “take counsel, lift up a vain appeal” (28:19 LXX). ‘The wisdom of the wise’ in 29:14b is the background of the plans made in secret in verse 15. Wisdom leads to plans and plans lead to action, so that this wisdom clearly has historical and political effects. It is not restricted to the everyday life of a community but determines the fate of nations. In Isa 31:1 Judah’s adopted strategy is to send an embassy to Egypt in request of help (οἱ καταβαίνοντες εἰς Αἴγυπτον ἐπὶ βοήθειαν), even though this will mean subservience to that foreign power. What Judah forgets is that Egypt belongs to the same category as Judah itself: Αἰγύπτιον ἄνθρωπον καὶ οὐ θεόν (31:3).

In 29:16 the prophet denounces the attitude of considering oneself wiser than God and one’s plans better than his, with the comparison, “Shall the thing formed say to the

⁶⁷ In the MT woe-exclamations occur in Isa 28-33 in five places, each time introducing a message of judgment. In MT the sixth place with a single woe-saying is 29:15, which may indicate that with Isa 29:15 a new woe-oracle begins. Accordingly, many commentators place a division between verses 14 and 15 (W.A.M. Beuken, “Isa 29:15-24: Perversion Reverted,” in *The Scriptures and the Scrolls* [ed. F. Garcia Martinez, A. Hilhorst, and C.J. Labuschagne; Leiden: Brill, 1992] 43-65; Procksch, *Jesaja I*, 378; J.D.W. Watts, *Isaiah 1-33* (Waco, Texas: Word, 1985) 386; Beuken, *Isaiah 28-39*, 101). E. König, *Das Buch Jesaja* (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann, 1926) 266, however, includes 29:15-16 with the preceding verses.

⁶⁸ K.T. Aitken, “Hearing and Seeing: Metamorphoses of a Motif in Isaiah 1-39,” in *Among the Prophets* (ed. P.R. Davies and D.J.A. Clines; Sheffield: Academic Press, 1993) 22, points this out with regard to the corresponding Hebrew roots **סתר** and **בין**.

one who formed it, “You did not form me”? The prophet shows the absurd implication of the people’s line of reasoning: the creature usurps the position of the creator. The last line of v.16 even suggests that man thinks that his maker has made him without understanding (LXX). Compared to MT’s “He has no understanding” (לֹא הִבִּין), the LXX attributes a lack of understanding not to God himself but to his act of making man, as οὐ συνετώς modifies “he has made me” (με ἐποίησας). Verse 16 serves to disqualify the false wisdom already criticized in verses 13–15. The simile in 29:16 has the same function at the end of the argument 29:9–16 as the wisdom simile of 28:23–29 at the end of the argument of chapter 28.⁶⁹

A caesura occurs after verse 16. The opening words of verse 17, “Is it not yet a little while ...?” with verbs in the future tense and the announcement of radical changes, signal a new pericope. A.T. Hanson,⁷⁰ K.T. Kleinknecht,⁷¹ and F. Wilk⁷² have pointed out that Isa 29:17–24 presents a revolution of the situation portrayed in 29:9–16. The great change begins in verse 17 with a reversal in nature and continues with a reversal in human society. The blind leaders (visionaries in their own eyes) in verse 10 must make way for the deaf who will hear, the blind who will see, and the poor who will rejoice διὰ κύριον (18–19). The change also brings an end to the arrogant (ὑπερήφανος ἀπώλετο, v.20), and “those who cause people to sin in word” (ἐν λόγῳ, v.21). While in LXX 29:9–16 leaders play an important role, in 17–24 leaders are no longer mentioned and it seems that the common people are singled out as those who receive salvation.

In summary, this consideration of the context of the quotation offers the following insights:

- An important aspect of the failure of the people’s leaders is that they teach ‘teachings of men’ (29:13), which corresponds with ‘the wisdom of the wise’ (29:14). This negative evaluation of human wisdom or instruction in 29:13–14 is part of the opposition between human and divine counsel in the context (e.g. Isa 30:1–2; 31:1–3).
- MT 29:14a describes God’s action, verse 14b its consequences for the wise: “the wisdom of the wise perishes, and the discernment of the discerning shall be hidden.” The LXX misses the suggestion of a causal connection. It expresses God’s action with four verbs in parallel, in the form of divine speech: “I will proceed,” “I will change (remove),” and “I will destroy,” and “I will hide” (LXX).
- The introductory words of Isa 29:14 (διὰ τοῦτο ἰδοὺ ἐγώ) establish a link with Isa 28:16, a verse that also announces a new work of God, but does so in a more specific manner (the laying of a foundation stone).
- The explicit critique of wisdom in 29:14b is continued in verse 15 with a denouncement of secret plans implicitly understood as the fruit of false wisdom,

⁶⁹ Cf. J. Barthel, *Prophetenwort und Geschichte* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1997) 389.

⁷⁰ A.T. Hanson, “The Cross in the End Time,” in *The Paradox of the Cross in the Thought of St Paul* (Sheffield: Academic Press, 1987) 14–5.

⁷¹ K.T. Kleinknecht, *Der leidende Gerechtfertigte: der alttestamentlich-jüdische Tradition vom leidenden Gerechten und ihre Rezeption bei Paulus*. (Tübingen: Mohr, 1988) 214–5.

⁷² Wilk, *Bedeutung*, 248.

and in verse 16 in the form of a simile referring to the creature taking the role of the creator.

- Isa 29:13–16 contains a critique of false wisdom but offers no alternative.
- Isa 29:17–24 presents a picture of salvation and restoration largely in answer to the religious-political failure portrayed in 29:9–16.

2.2 Implicit quotations in 1 Cor 1:20

Isa 33:18

1 Cor 1:20 has several important reminiscences of Scripture and we can speak of implicit citations when we succeed to trace these clauses to certain passages of Scripture. NA²⁷, commentaries and monographs, point to 3 small segments of the book of Isaiah: 33:18, 19:11–12, and 44:25. Some sounding is needed to find out whether these passages turn up in 1 Cor 1:20. We first look at Isa 33:18, because the threefold question of 1 Cor 1:20a repeats the pattern found in LXX Isa 33:18: “Where are the scholars? Where are the counsellors? Where is the one who counts those gathering together?” (NETS).

1 Cor 1:20a	Isa 33:18
ποῦ σοφός;	ποῦ εἰσιν οἱ γραμματικοί;
ποῦ γραμματεὺς;	ποῦ εἰσιν οἱ συμβουλευόντες;
ποῦ συζητητὴς τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου;	ποῦ ἐστὶν ὁ ἀριθμῶν τοὺς συστρεφομένους;

1 Cor 1:20 partly shares the syntactic structure of Isa 33:18 and partly reflects its semantic content. Semantically γραμματεὺς in 1 Cor corresponds with γραμματικοί in LXX Isa 33.⁷³ Both σοφός and συζητητὴς have some common ground with συμβουλευόντες. All terms belong to the sphere of dispute and the search for wisdom.⁷⁴ The third question (“where is the one who counts those gathering together,” NETS)⁷⁵ does not fit the

⁷³ The LXX Isaiah-translator reserved γραμματεὺς for a high government official (‘secretary,’ Isa 36:3, 22; 37:2) and used γραμματικός for a scribe, a procedure that accords with the meaning of the terms in a Greek context (cf. LSJ, e.g. Acts 19:35). A. van der Kooij links γραμματικός in 33:18 with the self-understanding of the LXX Isaiah-translator. He was a scribe in the Jewish sense as one who knew the prophetic writings and the book of Isaiah in particular; he was also γραμματικός in the Alexandrian sense of an interpreter of poetry and literature (Cf. Van der Kooij, *Textzeugen*, 62–3; critically: R.L. Troxel, *LXX-Isaiah as Translation and Interpretation* [Leiden: Brill, 2008] 19–22).

⁷⁴ With the use of this term LXX approaches 1 Cor 1:20 because συμβουλευόν and σοφός belong to the same semantic field, especially in the politically oriented concept of wisdom in Isaiah. In agreement with the MT (שָׂקָל) Sym has ὁ σταθμίζων (variant of σταθμάω, ‘to measure’), while Sym and Theod have ὁ διασταθμίζων (variant of διασταθμάομαι, ‘to separate,’ LSJ).

⁷⁵ NETS reads with A and S τοὺς συστρεφομένους; LEH prefers with B τοὺς τρεφομένους (‘those that are growing up’), supposing that the Hebrew Vorlage read הִמְגִּדֵּלִים (לְגִד part. Pu., cf. Ps 144:12) or הִמְגִּדֵּלִים (part Pi., cf. 2 Kgs 10:16). MT (‘where is the one who counted the towers’)

picture. It makes better sense in the context to translate συστρεφομένων with ‘conspirators.’ This is how the term also appears in 2 Kgdms 15:31, a text that deals with king David’s counselors Achitophel and Hushai. David prays in this verse that the counsel of Achitophel ‘be turned into foolishness’ (MT סכל Pi). This Hebrew verb form also occurs in Isa 44:25 and both places refer to the hearer’s decision to reject a counsel as worthless. The LXX with διασκεδάσον (‘break’) in 2 Kgdms 15:31 focuses not on the quality of the plan but on the success of its implementation.⁷⁶

In summary, the verbal agreement between 1 Cor 1:20 and Isa 33:18 consists of the threefold use of ποῦ, while there is semantic overlap with the subject of the first question. This is a rather small correspondence. Moreover, the literary context of LXX Isa 33:18 is not one of warning or judgment, but of salvation.⁷⁷ The ‘where’-questions are not meant as a provocation or challenge as in 1 Cor 1:20 but as an encouragement to the people. The scribes meant are not the scribes of the people and the people are glad to see them go. Of course, it is possible that Paul used this saying and transformed it by placing it in the new situation of 1 Cor 1–4 and we might have to pursue this course if there was not a different passage in Isaiah that shows more affinity with 1 Cor 1:20. That passage, viz. Isa 19:11–14, requires primary attention. At first sight Isa 19:12 shares with 1 Cor 1:20 only two significant words, ποῦ and σοφός, but its context will reveal more correspondences.

Isa 19:11-14

1 Cor 1:20a ποῦ σοφός;

Isa 19:12 ποῦ εἰσιν νῦν οἱ σοφοί σου;

G. von Rad already suggested that New Testament passages may refer to mutually related textual units within the Old Testament. The NT text may implicitly appeal to these other units as well.⁷⁸ Such a relationship exists between 1 Cor 1:19–20 on the one hand and Isa 29:9–16 and Isa 19:11–14 on the other hand. These Isaianic texts are each separately related to 1 Cor 1:19–20 by means of an explicit citation in 1:19 and an implicit citation in 1:20, but they are also mutually related within the book of Isaiah. Both texts deal with wise men or counsellors who have the task to advise their political rulers. Specific to the texts is that the rulers and counsellors of Isa 19 are Egyptians and those of Isa 29 Judeans.

The thought expressed in LXX Isa 19:14, ‘the Lord has mixed for them a spirit of erring’ (κύριος γὰρ ἐκέρασεν αὐτοῖς πνεῦμα πλανήσεως) appears again in LXX Isa 29:10, “the Lord has made you drink with a spirit of deep sleep” (πεπότικεν ὑμᾶς κύριος

has vocalized הַמִּגְדָּלִים as in 30:25, where ‘towers’ must be meant. Cf. L. Laberge, *La Septante d’Isaïe 28–33. Étude de tradition textuelle* (Ottawa: Centre de Recherche de l’Université Saint Paul, 1978) 108.

⁷⁶ Cf. G. Fleischer, “סכל,” *TWAT* 5:857–8.

⁷⁷ Cf. the heading of Isa 33 in LXX-D: “Die Befreiung Sions von allen Feinden und Gottlosen.”

⁷⁸ G. von Rad, *Theologie des Alten Testaments 2* (München: Kaiser, 1960) 374: the quoting practice in the New Testament implicitly tends to bring to light “inneralttestamentliche Zusammenhänge.”

πνεύματι κατανύξεως).⁷⁹ Isa 19:14 and 29:10 suggest that Egypt's and Judah's leaders share the same fate of having lost direction. The verb πλανάω in 19:14 is a favourite word of the Isaiah LXX-translator because he uses it many times when there is apparently no equivalent for it in the Hebrew (e.g. 21:15; 22:5; 30:20, 21; 41:10, 29). Isa 29:24 (LXX and MT) announces an end to wandering and erring (cf. 35:8). When πλανάω is used after 29:24, the verb refers to others who seek to lead the people astray (οἱ πλανῶντες σε/ ὑμᾶς, 30:20; 41:29) but are no longer able to do so because the people have received discernment (30:20–21).⁸⁰

The message of hope of 29:17–24 has in its turn a parallel in Isa 19:16–25, an exceptional passage because it announces that the Egyptians will know and worship the Lord (19:21).⁸¹ In MT 19:25 the Lord calls Egypt 'my people,' but this qualification is not found in the LXX.⁸² We have no linguistic evidence that Paul made use of Isa 19:16–25 anywhere in his letters, even though this passage would have provided excellent material to confirm the mission to the Gentiles. We guess that Paul in his westward orientation was less concerned with or not interested in Egypt and Mesopotamia. For him the term 'Gentiles' was almost a synonym of 'Greeks,' as is evident from his use of the terms in 1 Cor 1:22–24.⁸³

⁷⁹ With "the Lord has given you to drink" (πεπότικεν ὑμᾶς κύριος) LXX Isa 29:10 stays within the sphere of drinking and drunkenness of the previous verse, and thereby departs from the verb 'pour out' (פָּצַק) of 29:10 in the Masoretic Text. That פָּצַק is rendered with πεπότικεν finds its origin in Psalms 59:5 LXX (ἐπότισας ἡμᾶς οἶνον κατανύξεως). The two verses stand in connection with each other not only because of the verb ποτίζω, but especially because this is the only other place of the Septuagint where the noun κατάνυξις occurs. "There can hardly be any doubt that, in this case, it was the passage in the Septuagint of the Psalms that served as example to the Isaiah passage in question" (Seeligmann, *Version*, 71–2).

⁸⁰ The idea of Israel straying recedes after 29:24. In later chapters straying is especially attributed to those who make and worship idols (44:20; 46:5, 8). When πλανάω is still applied to the people it refers to the past and is part of a community confession (53:6; 63:17; 64:5). Accordingly, not only 29:9–24 ends with the community being redeemed from wandering, but LXX Isaiah as a whole exhibits this pattern.

⁸¹ καὶ γνώσονται οἱ Αἰγύπτιοι τὸν κύριον ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ.

⁸² "Blessed be Egypt my people (עַמִּי), and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel my heritage" (NRSV); 'Blessed are my people that are in Egypt, and among the Assyrians, even Israel my heritage' (LXX, as rendered in NETS).

⁸³ In this respect Isa 66:19 is probably more relevant for Paul: in the mission εἰς τὰ ἔθνη, the list of 6 names ends with εἰς τὴν Ἑλλάδα. (καὶ ἐξαποστελῶ ἐξ αὐτῶν σεσφωμένους εἰς τὰ ἔθνη, εἰς Θαρσῖς καὶ Φουδ καὶ Λουδ καὶ Μοσοχ καὶ Θοβελ καὶ εἰς τὴν Ἑλλάδα καὶ εἰς τὰς νήσους τὰς πόρρω, οἱ οὐκ ἀκηκόασιν μου τὸ ὄνομα οὐδὲ ἐωράκασιν τὴν δόξαν μου, καὶ ἀναγγελοῦσίν μου τὴν δόξαν ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν). In the Hebrew these peoples are not Israel's neighbours but nations that can only be reached across the Mediterranean Sea; for that reason they are called 'coastlands' (W.A.M. Beuken, *Jesaja, IIIB* (Nijkerk: Callenbach, 1989) 138; the Septuagint speaks of 'islands' as an additional category through its use of καί). That this passage had the apostle's interest is observable from the implicit citation of Isa 66:20 in Rom 15:16. (J.R. Wagner, *Heralds*, 215, however, sees no allusion here).

The pericope Isa 19:11-14 relates closely to the verses 19:1-4. This opening of the oracle signals a collapse of Egypt's civil and religious order. The oracle announces in 19:1 the coming of the Lord to Egypt to the dismay of its 'hand-made' gods (LXX). Internal strife will be rampant (v.2) and cruel men will rule the land (v.4). The disturbed Egyptians seek guidance from their gods, from their images, from ventriloquists (ἐγγαστριμύθοι), as well as "from those who speak from the earth" (τοὺς ἐκ τῆς γῆς φωνοῦντας). Isaiah also uses this expression for Judah (Isa 8:19 and 29:4). The next passage, Isa 19:5-10 is an intermezzo on what happens when Egypt's lifeline, the Nile, dries up.

Isa 19:11-14 continues with a challenge to the protagonists of Egypt's famous intellectual tradition. In verse 11b a provocative question directly addresses the counsellors. As if they remain silent, verse 12a continues with a question about their incapacity, put to the king. Pragmatically this text has the same impact as Isa 29:14 has. When they are confronted with God's plan (19:12) or God's action (29:14), the hollowness or absence of wisdom among those who should know –the wise men and counsellors – is exposed.

LXX Isa 19:11-12

11 καὶ μωροὶ ἔσονται οἱ ἄρχοντες
 Τάνεως·
 οἱ σοφοὶ σύμβουλοι τοῦ βασιλέως,
 ἡ βουλὴ αὐτῶν μωρανθήσεται.
 πῶς ἐρεῖτε τῷ βασιλεῖ Υἱοὶ συνετῶν
 ἡμεῖς, υἱοὶ βασιλέων τῶν ἐξ ἀρχῆς;
 12 ποῦ εἰσιν νῦν οἱ σοφοί σου;
 καὶ ἀναγγειλάτωσάν σοι καὶ εἰπάτωσαν
 τί βεβούλευται κύριος σαβαωθ ἐπ'
 Αἴγυπτον.

11. And the rulers of Tanis will be fools;
 as for the wise counsellors of the king,
 their counsel will become foolish.
 How will you say to the king,
 "We are sons of sages,
 sons of kings who were from the
 beginning"?
 12. Where now are your wise men?
 And let them also declare to you and say
 what the Lord Sabaoth has planned
 against Egypt.

MT Isa 19:11-12

11 אֲדָ-אֱוֹלִים שָׂרֵי צֶעַן
 חֲכָמֵי יַעֲצִי פֶרְעָה
 עֲצָה נִבְעָרָה
 אֵיךְ תֹּאמְרוּ אֶל-פֶּרְעָה בֶן-חֲכָמִים אָנִי
 בֶּן-מַלְכֵי-קִדְמָה:
 12 אַיִם אַפּוֹא חֲכָמֶיךָ
 וַיְגִידוּ נָא לָךְ וַיֵּדְעוּ
 מַה-יַּעֲשֶׂי יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת עַל-מִצְרָיִם:

11. The princes of Zoan are utterly foolish;
 the wise counsellors of Pharaoh
 give stupid counsel.
 How can you say to Pharaoh,
 "I am one of the sages,
 a descendant of ancient kings"?
 12. Where now are your sages?
 Let them tell you and make known
 what the Lord of hosts has planned
 against Egypt.

Notwithstanding their credentials, the counsellors of Egypt's king are described as 'fools' (μωροί). Μωρός (19:11) reappears only in 32:5-6 in LXX Isaiah and is also rare in the

Septuagint,⁸⁴ except for the book Sirach (28 instances). This suggests that μωρός is a late term, unlike **אורל**, its equivalent in MT.⁸⁵ Μωροί is here applied to rulers, and in 32:5 we also read about rulers: “and they will no longer tell the fool to rule” (καὶ οὐκέτι μὴ εἴπωσιν τῷ μωρῷ ἄρχειν).⁸⁶ An end to bad rule is part of the promise of a restored and new society. Thus, in both places in LXX Isaiah where μωρός occurs, it refers to ἄρχειν / ἄρχοντες. The epithet ‘fool’ applies to Egypt’s rulers (19:11) and appears in a general saying (32:5), but is not given to Judah’s rulers in 29:9–16 or elsewhere. LXX Isa 19:11 has in common with Isa 5:21 that it uses συνετός instead of σοφός, while the Hebrew text has **חכם** in both cases.⁸⁷

In the oracle of Isa 19 the name ‘Egypt’ is mentioned many times, especially in 19:1–4 and 11–14. Because of Egypt’s prestige and relative proximity, compared to Mesopotamia, Israel looked to the land of the Pharaoh’s for political wisdom during the time of the monarchy.⁸⁸ LXX Isa 19:11 speaks of ‘the rulers of Tanis’ (MT refers with Zoan to the same city). Tanis (also mentioned in 30:4) was situated in the northeast of Egypt and may be seen as the ‘gate to Asia.’ Consequently, the Pharaohs valued the advice of its rulers on Asian politics.⁸⁹ They prided themselves in their lineage, even tracing their heritage back to the kings of the beginning. Egypt’s wisdom is *Beamtenweisheit*,⁹⁰ and the persons concerned are σοφοὶ σύμβουλοι τοῦ βασιλέως, a terminology that directs us to the court of the king, the place where policies are made. There is an intimate relationship between the king/the rulers, counsel, and wisdom. Wisdom is closely affiliated with counsel and 19:3, “I will scatter their counsel” (καὶ τὴν βουλήν αὐτῶν διασκεδάσω),⁹¹ agrees not only in form but also in meaning with the explicit quotation from 29:14 “I will destroy the wisdom of the wise.” The idea of Isa 19:3 and the word βουλή are resumed in 19:11 with “their counsel will become foolish” (ἡ βουλή αὐτῶν μωρανθήσεται).

In conclusion:

- Confusion and social and political disorder are the result of God’s judgment in Isa 19:1–4 and 19:14 (“the Lord has mingled for them a spirit of wandering”).

⁸⁴ Only in Deut 32:6; Job 16:8; Ψ 93:8; Jer 5:21.

⁸⁵ **אורל** is a typical wisdom term (of the 26 occurrences 19 appear in Proverbs, especially in its older collections). It is the exact opposite of **חכם** (Wildberger 719).

⁸⁶ This sentence is connected with Isa 29:9–24 because it is immediately preceded by a sentence which is added to 29:24: “and the stammering tongues will soon (‘soon’ not in 29:24) learn to speak peace” (32:4).

⁸⁷ A connection may exist with the book of Genesis. Considering the exemplary role of LXX Pentateuch for the LXX Isaiah–translator, the latter may have valued a connection with LXX Gen 41:33 and 39, where Joseph, a wise man in Egypt, is called συνετός. When dealing with the wise men of Egypt **חכם** in Isa 19:11 is rendered συνετός instead of σοφός. Cf. M. Crougns, “Intertextuality in the Septuagint: The Case of Isaiah 19,” *BIOCS* 34 (2001) 90–1.

⁸⁸ Cf. A. Alt, “Die Weisheit Salomos,” *Kleine Schriften* II (München: Beck, 1957?) 90–99; T.N.D. Mettinger, *Solomonic State Officials* (Lund: CWK Gleerup, 1971); Wildberger, *Jesaja*, 1397.

⁸⁹ Wildberger, *Jesaja*, 718.

⁹⁰ Wildberger, *Jesaja*, 718–9.

⁹¹ Cf. 2 Kgdms 15:31, the prayer of David: Διασκεδάσον δὴ τὴν βουλήν Αχίτοφελ, κύριε ὁ θεός μου.

- In the book of Isaiah leadership, good and bad, is an important theme.
- Wisdom and politics are mutually dependent in Isa 19:11–13, as expressed with “wise counsellors of the king.”
- In Isaiah the designation ‘fools’ is specifically applied to the ἄρχοντες.
- The wise men in 19:11 are not able to say what the God of Israel has planned against Egypt. In Isa 19:12 the question: “Where are your wise men?” entails (here explicitly) the challenge: “Let them declare what the Lord has planned!”
- Wisdom and divination appear side by side. See also Isa 44:24–28 below.

Isa 44:24–28

Even though Isa 33:18 and especially 19:11–12 already give clear signs of an intertextual relationship with 1 Cor 1:20, another Isaianic text, 44:25, can also be seen to linger in the background. The active form of ‘make foolish’ and the relevant context may even give the primacy to this text.⁹² The first three verses of the pericope 44:24–28 read as follows:

LXX Isa 44:24–26

24 Οὕτως λέγει κύριος ὁ λυτρούμενός σε
καὶ ὁ πλάσσων σε ἐκ κοιλίας
Ἐγὼ κύριος ὁ συντελὼν πάντα
ἐξέτεινα τὸν οὐρανὸν μόνος
καὶ ἐστερέωσα τὴν γῆν. τίς ἕτερος
25 διασκεδάσει σημεῖα ἐγγαστριμύθων
καὶ μαντείας ἀπὸ καρδίας,
ἀποστρέφων φρονίμους εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω
καὶ τὴν βουλήν αὐτῶν μωρεύων
26 καὶ ἰστών ῥήματα παιδὸς αὐτοῦ
καὶ τὴν βουλήν τῶν ἀγγέλων αὐτοῦ
ἀληθεύων;
ὁ λέγων Ἱερουσαλημ Κατοικηθήσῃ,
καὶ ταῖς πόλεσιν τῆς Ἰουδαίας
Οἰκοδομηθήσεσθε,
καὶ τὰ ἔρημα αὐτῆς ἀνατελεῖ

24 Thus says the Lord, who redeems you,
who forms you in the womb;
I am the Lord, who accomplishes all things,
I alone stretched out heaven,
and I bolstered the earth. Who else
25 will scatter the signs given by
ventriloquists and the divination from the

MT Isa 44:24–26

24 כֹּה־אָמַר יְהוָה גֹּאֲלְךָ
וַיִּצְרְךָ מִבֶּטֶן
אֲנֹכִי יְהוָה עֹשֶׂה כָּל
נֹטָה שָׁמַיִם לְבַדִּי
רָקַע הָאָרֶץ מִי אֶתִּי
25 מִפֶּר אֹתוֹת בְּדִים
וְקִסְמִים יְהוֹלִל
מְשִׁיב חֲכָמִים אַחֲזֹר
וְדַעְתָּם יִשְׁכַּל׃
26 מִקִּים דְּבַר עַבְדּוֹ
וַעֲצַת מְלֹאכָיו
יִשְׁלִים
הָאָמַר לִירוּשָׁלַם תּוֹשָׁב
וּלְעָרֵי יְהוּדָה
תִּבְנֶינָה
וְחֲרֻבוֹתֶיהָ אֶקְוֶם׃

24 Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer,
who formed you in the womb;
I am the Lord, who made all things,
who alone stretched out the heavens,
who by myself spread out the earth;
25 who frustrates the omens of liars,
and makes fools of diviners;

⁹² Cf. F. Wilk, “Isaiah in 1 and 2 Corinthians,” in *Isaiah in the New Testament* (ed. S. Moyise and M.J.J. Menken; T&T Clark, 2005) 139.

heart,
turning the wise backward
and making their counsel foolish
26 and confirming the words of his servant
and proving true the counsel of his
messengers?

The one who says to Ierousalem, “You
shall be inhabited,”
and to the cities of Judea, “You shall be
built,”
and her deserted places shall arise,

who turns back the wise,
and makes their knowledge foolish;
26 who confirms the word of his servant
and fulfills the prediction of his
messengers;

who says to Jerusalem, “It shall be
inhabited,”

and of the cities of Judah, “They shall be
rebuilt, and I will raise up their ruins”

The language of creation in verse 24 corresponds with 45:7. Moreover, the *Selbstvorstellungsformel* “I am the Lord” in 44:25 returns in 45:5–7, which gives the section 44:24–45:7 (‘Cyrus-oracle’) a chiastic structure. The beginning and the end of the oracle emphasize both the uniqueness and the universal claim of YHWH. The theme of knowing the Lord (cf. Chapter 9.2.2) plays a role in Isa 45:5 speaking of Cyrus not knowing him and in 45:6 expressing the purpose that the ends of the earth will know that YHWH is the only God.

The textual unit 44:24–28 begins with a *Selbstvorstellungsformel* that is followed by a succession of participles. The sentence structure of Isa 44:24–28 is also found in the pre-text of other quotations. Jer 9:23 (quoted in 1 Cor 1:31) has incorporated a *Selbstvorstellungsformel* that is also followed by a participle.⁹³ Job 5:13 (quoted in 1 Cor 3:19) belongs to a long succession of doxological statements in 5:8–13 expressing divine action in the form of participles.⁹⁴ In all these instances confidence in YHWH is encouraged not by a multiplication of names but by considering his actions in history.⁹⁵

This passage has in common with Isa 19:11–14 the words ἐγγαστριμύθοι (19:3)⁹⁶ and διασκεδάζω (also in Isa 9:4, 11; 24:5; 32:7) in combination with βουλεύομαι as in 8:10, 14:27, and 19:3). There is some variation in wording between the MT and LXX of Isa 44:25–26. The term βουλή functions for both עֲצָה (v.26) and דַּעַת (v.25), while חֲכָמִים is rendered φρονίμοι.⁹⁷ Within MT 44:24–28 the verses 25–26a form a syntactical

⁹³ LXX ἐγὼ εἶμι κύριος ποιῶν ...

⁹⁴ 5:8 κύριον ... 12 διαλλάσσοντα βουλὰς πανούργων ... 13 ὁ καταλαμβάνων σοφοὺς ἐν τῇ φρονήσει.

⁹⁵ In the ancient Near East, gods were great by their many names. In this religious context YHWH seems poorly endowed but his glory is not found in his names but in his actions. “Der ganze Erweis der Herrlichkeit der Selbstvorstellung im Namen wird in Israel vom geschichtlichen Handeln Jahwes erwartet. ... Auch die neutestamentliche Verkündigung ... redet hier nicht anders” (W. Zimmerli, Das Wort des göttlichen Selbsterweises (Erweiswort), eine prophetische Gattung,” in *Gottes Offenbarung. Gesammelte Aufsätze* (München: Kaiser, 1963) 128.

⁹⁶ The only other place in LXX Isaiah with this term is 8:19.

⁹⁷ Only here in LXX Isaiah but frequent in Proverbs.

unit.⁹⁸ LXX has the same unit, even though it employs the form of a question: “Who else will scatter (τίς ἕτερος διασκεδάσει) ...” continued with a series of participles “turning (ἀποστρέφων) the wise backward and making their counsel foolish (μωρεύων),” followed by “and confirming (ἰστών) the words of his servant and proving true (ἀληθεύων) the counsel of his messengers?” This sentence places side by side the counsel of the wise and the words (MT ‘word’) of the servant; the first will be made foolish, the second will be confirmed.

Another theme of intertextual interest in Isa 44:24–28 is the announcement that building will take place. Again we read a participle with God as subject in verses 26 and 28. In verse 28 the announcement of building (“who says to Ierousalem, ‘You shall be built’”), is followed by “I will lay the foundation of my holy house” (28b).⁹⁹ Not only the theme of building but also some of the words are echoed in 1 Cor 3:11 and 17.¹⁰⁰ In Isaiah the name Zion was also applied to its inhabitants and even became a name for the people by metonymy. Consequently, in the new context of 1 Cor 1–4, Isa 44:26 can be read as announcement that God will build the community.

In conclusion:

- Isa 44:24–28 contains the pattern – also found in Jer 9:23 (linked to 1 Cor 1:31) and Job 5:13 (linked to 1 Cor 3:19) of a *Selbstvorstellungsformel* (“I am the Lord”), followed by parallel sentences that often begin with a participle describing a divine action. The text contains the language that, when spoken by men, becomes a hymn of praise (cf. the doxological tendency in 1 Cor 1:30–31).
- The divine actions listed in v.25b (“turning backward..., and making foolish ..., confirming the words of his servant ... and proving true ..., the one saying ... ‘you shall be built’”), correspond with the themes of 1 Cor 1:20, 1:18 (the word of the cross), and 3:10–12 (building the community).

3. Reception of Scripture in 1 Cor 1:18–25

In the following discussion of the intertextual relationship between Isaiah and 1 Cor 1–4 both discontinuity and continuity will be observed. The first section, 3.1, brings transformations to light caused by the eschatological setting of 1 Cor 1–4. This setting differs decisively from the unrealized eschatology of the pre-text. In other respects, text and pre-text betray similar patterns and intentions. 3.2. shows that there is continuity in the character of God’s actions and in the readiness to confront the wisdom of the wise.

⁹⁸ After the first person language in verse 24, verse 25 shifts to the third person. MT has three times a combination of a participle followed by the imperfect (Beuken, *Jesaja II*, 228–9).

⁹⁹ ὁ λέγων Ἱερουσαλημ Οἰκοδομηθήσῃ, καὶ τὸν οἶκον τὸν ἅγιόν μου θεμελιώσω.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. 1 Cor 3:17b: ὁ γὰρ ναὸς τοῦ θεοῦ ἅγιός ἐστιν, οἳτινές ἐστε ὑμεῖς.

3.1 Discontinuity

Times have changed

Attention is required to the manner in which the first quotation is handled in 1 Cor 1–4. The wording in 1 Cor 1:19 agrees with LXX 29:14b, except for the last word.

1 Cor 1:19	Isa 29:14b
ἀπολῶ τὴν σοφίαν τῶν σοφῶν, καὶ τὴν σύνεσιν τῶν συνετῶν ἄθετήσω	ἀπολῶ τὴν σοφίαν τῶν σοφῶν καὶ τὴν σύνεσιν τῶν συνετῶν κρύψω

There is little doubt among scholars that the last word was not found in any version of Isa 29:14 and that Paul substitutes LXX's final word κρύψω with ἄθετήσω, probably because the latter verb fits better in the argument of 1 Cor 1–4.¹⁰¹ 'To hide' allows that the absence of understanding may be temporary; 'to set aside' signifies an end once for all. The verb ἄθετέω signifies 'to declare invalid' or 'to set at naught' and the finality implied agrees with the definite action 'destroy' (ἀπολῶ) in the first line.¹⁰² The verb ἄθετέω is nearly a synonym of καταργέω, that describes the demise of 'the things that are' (1:28) and 'the rulers of this age' (2:6). By using ἄθετέω the text points out that something definitive has happened that overrules the authorities of this age.

We may ask whether the word ἄθετήσω signals an intertextual connection with Scripture. With regard to the source of ἄθετέω there are three possibilities:

- 1) The verb may derive from Paul's own vocabulary as he uses ἄθετέω in four other places in his letters.¹⁰³ Yet the verb occurs in a context of explicit and implicit quotations so that we are encouraged to trace its origin in the same direction. Connecting ἄθετήσω with Scripture contributes more to our understanding than restricting the word to the level of Paul's letter.
- 2) The verb ἄθετέω occurs in LXX Isaiah in relevant places. In the opening lines of the book the Lord speaks αὐτοὶ δέ με ἠθέτησαν (1:2) and in 24:16 we read about οἱ ἄθετοῦντες τὸν νόμον. This shows that the people have a practice of ἄθετέω. They set aside their God and his law. Yet, while in these places in Isaiah 'to set aside' is an action of the people, in 1 Cor 1:19 it is an action of God.
- 3) Finally, ἄθετέω is used in a comparable fashion in LXX Psalms. The thought of Isa 29:14 corresponds with the sense of Ps 32:10 LXX (κύριος διασκεδάσει βουλὰς ἔθνων, ἄθετεῖ δὲ λογισμοὺς λαῶν καὶ ἄθετεῖ βουλὰς ἀρχόντων),¹⁰⁴ a verse in which ἄθετέω occurs twice. This connection is to be preferred above the preceding options, for three

¹⁰¹ Koch, *Zeuge*, 152–3; Wilk, *Bedeutung*, 18, 44–5.

¹⁰² Koch, *Zeuge*, 152–3.

¹⁰³ Gal 2:21; 3:15; 1 Thess 4:8; 5:12.

¹⁰⁴ The last clause does not occur in Ps 33:10 MT: יְהוָה הַפִּיר עֲצַת־גּוֹיִם הִנְיָא מַחְשְׁבוֹת עַמִּים

reasons. In the first place, the sense of Ψ 32:10 is very much in line with the sense of 1 Cor 1:19. Secondly, the presence of ‘peoples’/‘nations’ in this verse, as well as ‘rulers’ (cf. 1 Cor 2:6, 8), supports Paul’s intention “to universalize the Isaianic text to fit the context in 1 Corinthians.”¹⁰⁵ Thirdly, the context in Ψ 32 presents a conflict between human plans and divine intentions that one also finds in 1 Cor 1.

While Isa 19:11 has the future tense in “their counsel will become foolish” (ἡ βουλή αὐτῶν μωρανθήσεται) and Isa 44:25 the present participle (τὴν βουλήν αὐτῶν) μωρεύων, depending on the main verb in the future tense διασκεδάσει, 1 Cor 1:20 uses ἐμώρανε. This aorist indicates that God’s action is a past event. The action of making foolish is closely connected with the past event of the cross (1 Cor 1:17–18). Yet the verbs of the explicit citation in 1:19, ἀπολῶ and ἀθετήσω keep the future tense they have in the pre-text. This must mean that the citation is read as a prophetic text that has now been fulfilled.¹⁰⁶

A contextual shift has taken place between Isa 29 and 1 Cor 1. The rhetorical situation of Paul’s letter differs decisively from the rhetorical situation of Isaiah’s text. The main reason for this shift is the eschatological framework of 1 Cor 1–4. The letter says that the recipients are the ones “on whom the end of the ages has come” (10:11). The first nine verses of the letter firmly set the tone. They manifest a strong sense of fulfilment through their frequent use of the name ‘Christ Jesus’ (‘Messiah Jesus’) or ‘Jesus Christ.’ That the order ‘Christ Jesus’ is found at the beginning of the greeting (1:1, 2), and in the thanksgiving (1:4) is probably not without significance. It signals: the Messiah has come. Verse 6 states this explicitly: “The witness to the Christ/Messiah has been confirmed among you.” Other eschatological phenomena are the advent of the Spirit (cf. 2:4, etc.) and the election of Gentiles (1 Cor 1:24).

Nevertheless, besides the fulfilment in the recent past, a present and future dimension cannot be excluded. The focus of 1:19 is not only on the past event of the cross but also on the ongoing proclamation of the word of the cross. The text conveys that a confrontation takes place between the word of the cross and the wisdom of the wise wherever the word comes. This emphasis on the present and the future agrees with the dynamic and unfinished perspective of 1 Cor 1:18–25. This tone has already been set by the present tenses τοῖς ἀπολλυμένοις and τοῖς σωζομένοις, as well as by the present (μωρία) ἐστίν and (δύναμις θεοῦ) ἐστίν in the thesis of verse 18.

The coming of the Messiah does not mean the final fulfilment of prophetic Scripture. The ‘day of the Lord’ – now called ‘the day of our Lord Jesus Christ’ (1:8) – and his revelation (1:7) are still expected. 1 Cor 1–4 evidences a two-phase eschatology because for Paul the expectations have been partially fulfilled. The Messiah has come, the Spirit has been given to God’s people, and Gentiles share in God’s calling, but the apostle still awaits the final judgment (3:13; 4:4), the glory that is to come (2:7), and the perfect reign of God (4:8). We may even say that there are two eschatological ‘days’ for Paul, viz. this ‘day of salvation’ (cf. 2 Cor 6:2) and the coming day of the Lord. The letter ends

¹⁰⁵ Heil, *Role*, 18.

¹⁰⁶ Wilk, “Isaiah in 1 and 2 Corinthians,” 136.

(16:22-24) with the same twofold emphasis with which it begins: the present reality of Christ and the expectation of his future coming ('maranatha,' 16:22).

How does this relate to Paul's reading of Isaiah? Isa 29 seems to present two phases in succession. In Isaiah 29 incomprehension (verses 9-16) is followed by understanding (verses 17-24). The text shows a point of transition in time from judgment in verses 9-16 to salvation in 17-24. The transition is marked by the introductory statements 'yet a little while' in v.17 and 'on that day' in v.18. In Isa 29 rejection is largely a matter of the present in verses 9-16,¹⁰⁷ while acceptance belongs to the future in verses 17-24. 1 Cor 1:18-25, however, presents both attitudes as part of the present. While the original context of the citation looks for fulfillment to the future, the new context declares the arrival of the time of fulfillment, even though besides acceptance, rejection of God's message continues to take place. Rejection and acceptance occur simultaneously. 1 Cor 1:18 shows that the cross is the origin of a parting of the ways.

The expression ὁ αἰὼν οὗτος in 1 Cor 1:20 does not have a precedent in the Isaianic pre-texts relating to this verse (19:11-12; 33:18; 44:45). The best explanation of its appearance is that it indicates the eschatological frame of reference of 1 Cor 1-4. The expression ὁ αἰὼν οὗτος belongs to apocalyptic language and speaking of 'this age' suggests the existence of a different age. By qualifying the wise man, the scribe, and the debater as representatives of this age, they are set apart from the new that has come. This temporal tension cannot be resolved, as J. Weiss does, by assuming that in 1 Cor 1-4 αἰὼν has fully turned into a qualitative and spatial category.¹⁰⁸ In line with Scripture, apocalyptic literature, Qumran writings, and Rabbinic tradition the term αἰὼν (עולם) has to do with time, so that 1 Cor 1-4 evidences an eschatological situation. However, while these Jewish writings give an impression of the nearly contemporaneous use of this language, it is dubious whether Paul derived the expression 'this age' from those quarters. Fitzmyer remarks that speaking in terms of two ages is "practically unattested in Jewish writings prior to A.D. 70. Neither Philo nor Josephus nor Qumran Literature makes such a distinction of aeons."¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷ Exceptions are the verses 10b and 11-12 in the Septuagint, indicating that rejection will persist in the future, apparently in harmony with the future judgment expressed in 29:14b. Even in the salvation oracle of 29:17-24 judgment is not absent, because verses 20-21 speak of the downfall of the arrogant.

¹⁰⁸ Weiss 28.

¹⁰⁹ Fitzmyer 175. Cf. BDAG, s.v. 2.

3.2 Continuity

Shocking the wise

In 1 Cor 1-4 the emphasis is on the unprecedented and shocking character of the cross event. It is so completely out of the ordinary, and contrary to generally accepted wise forms of action that men consider it sheer foolishness. LXX Isa 29:14a – i.e. the first part of the verse of which the second part (14b) is quoted in 1 Cor 1:19 – speaks of a divine act of change. That 29:14a refers to unexpected divine action, is supported by the context of LXX Isa 28-29, e.g. Isa 28:21 typifies God's work as 'strange' and Isa 28:23-29 teaches that God's historical action possesses a logic of its own.

There is continuity between the pre-text and the receptor text on the pragmatic level. In both cases the language used is highly disturbing for the audience. The target text reproduces the formidable challenge put to the wise. Wise men of Judah (29:14), counselors of Egypt (19:11-12), and diviners of Babel (44:45) are pillars of political stability in their lands. Their inability to discern God's work in history is a shock for those who depend on them. Like their counterparts in Isaiah and Jeremiah, the σόφος, γραμματεὺς, and συζητήτης in 1 Corinthians embody the support of humanity in its search for truth and guidance. They do not constitute a mediocre company but represent man's highest achievements and his most revered traditions.

The wisdom of the world in 1 Cor 1-4 relates to the wisdom of the wise in Isaiah. This is evident from the fact that Paul first quotes Isaiah on 'the wisdom of the wise' (1:19) and then expounds Isaiah's text by speaking of 'the wisdom of the world' (1:20). The statement, "has not God made foolish the wisdom *of the world?*" (implying: through the event of the cross) is pragmatically the equivalent of "I will destroy the wisdom *of the wise.*" By means of these implicit and explicit quotations on human wisdom prophet and apostle are conversation partners in 1 Cor 1-4. In the next chapter another prophet joins them.

Chapter 9: Wisdom and Boasting (1 Cor 1:26-31)

1. Structural and Semantic Features of 1 Cor 1:26-31

1.1 Teleology

The argument in 1 Cor 1:26-31 progresses quickly by building on earlier elements. Four features contribute to this progressive movement. In the first place the *correctio* in vv.26-27. *Correctio* is the name N. Schneider gives to this particular form of antithesis with οὐ(κ)-ἀλλά. He notes that this is the dialogical form of more than half of the antitheses in Paul's letters.¹ Three substantival clauses in v. 26 begin with the negation οὐ and are followed by ἀλλά in v.27. The text first states what is not the case and uses this as contrast for that which is the case. According to Schneider Paul's use of *correctio* is not simply a matter of style but also a matter of content and as such part of his theology.²

A second contribution to the forward movement of 1:26-31 are the purpose-clauses in the verses 27, 28, 29, and 31. The threefold repetition of ἵνα in vv. 27-28 and the single ὅπως in v. 29 already suffice to call the structure of the text 'teleological'.³ Verse 29 begins with ὅπως instead of with ἵνα apparently only for reason of variation (BDR §369⁸). In verse 31 the pericope ends with a final ἵνα-clause.

A third aspect is the form of the parallelism in verse 28, which places the emphasis at the end. This feature has already been noted for the verses 20a, 22-24. The period in vv. 27-28 consists of a threefold parallelism of which the third part in verse 28 is much longer. Having an extended last sentence in the parallel structure accords with the recommendations of ancient rhetoricians (BDR §490⁴). In the eyes of E. Norden in Paul's employment of parallelism two traditions meet: the Hellenistic literary small-scale parallelism and the Jewish extended parallelism found in the Psalms and the Prophets.⁴

Finally, a fourth aspect of the teleological nature of the section is the climax in vv. 30-31, consisting of a shortening of the sentences and a concentration of content. In 1:30 the language becomes personal again (ὕμεῖς and ἡμῖν) and connects the readers by means of prepositions with God as source (ἐξ αὐτοῦ, ἀπὸ θεοῦ) and Christ as place (ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ). The subordinate clause ὅς ἐγενήθη σοφία ἡμῖν ἀπὸ θεοῦ shares with other Christological formulas the opening relative pronoun ὅς (e.g. Phil 2:6; Col 1:15; 1 Tim 3:16; Heb 1:3). The essential (on σοφία) seems to have been said, but the clause continues with δικαιοσύνη τε καὶ ἁγιασμός καὶ ἀπολύτρωσις apparently to give more food for the boasting in the next verse by extolling the benefits received through Christ.

¹ N. Schneider, *Die rhetorische Eigenart der paulinischen Antithese* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1970) 48, 68.

² Schneider, *Eigenart*, 67

³ Cf. Kümmel in Lietzmann 170; E. Stauffer, "ἵνα," *TWNT* 3:324-30, 329.

⁴ E. Norden, *Agnostos Theos. Untersuchungen zur Formengeschichte religiöser Rede* (1912; repr., Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1971) 260-1.

The section ends in verse 31 with a final purpose clause, incorporating words of Scripture. The negative statement, “that no flesh shall boast before God” (v.29), finds its positive counterpart in “who boasts must boast in the Lord” in verse 31. This is the final challenge put before the readers: God has given you by means of Christ his wisdom, and also his righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. How can you then boast in anything else but in the Lord? In this climax the pericope leaves the audience with a choice between two forms of boasting as the ultimate choice.⁵

1.2 Redefinition

As Collins observes, 1 Cor 1:26–31 employs a rhetorical strategy of ‘redefinition.’⁶ The pericope opens by calling the audience’s attention with the word βλέπετε (v.26). It is appropriate to take βλέπετε as an imperative, because the “threefold statement in v 26 is a statement of challenge, not simply a statement of fact.”⁷ The text calls readers to consider in the first place their ‘calling,’ an elliptic way of saying ‘the circumstances of your calling.’ This meaning of v.26 is unfolded by the next sentence with the three substantival clauses οὐ πολλοὶ σοφοὶ κατὰ σάρκα, οὐ πολλοὶ δυνατοί, and οὐ πολλοὶ εὐγενεῖς.⁸ The prepositional phrase ‘according to the flesh’ (i.e. ‘according to human standards’) does not only modify ‘not many wise,’ but also ‘not many powerful,’ and ‘not many well-born.’ In the next sentence all three groups are modified by ‘of the world,’ which corresponds with ‘according to the flesh.’⁹ The ‘foolish of the world’ means those who are foolish in the estimation of the world. The same is true for the weak and those of no account. In the preceding pericope ‘the world’ received a negative interpretation, at least in the area of understanding reality. After in verse 21 ‘the world’ has not been able to know God through its wisdom (v.21) and God has even made foolish the wisdom of the world (v.20), the world also turns out to be an unreliable guide for estimating people (1:26–28). The text redefines the Corinthians according to what they are in Christ.

The important verbs in v. 27 are ἐκλέγω and καταισχύνω. The verb ἐκλέγω is rare in Paul’s writings (cf. Eph 1:4), but occurs frequently in the LXX, especially in the books belonging to the Hebrew canon (129 instances). Paul affirms the election of Israel in the letter to the Romans (9:11; 11:28–29), here he applies the idea of election to the Christian community (1 Cor 1:27–28, cf. Rom 8:33). Election as a typical act of God on behalf of man gives the passage a theological starting point. That the Corinthians live in a

⁵ Schneider, *Rhetorik*, 102: “Es ist ein besonderer Zug in der paulinische Theologie, dass ein Problem auf seine letzte Antithese zurückgeführt wird, die nicht mehr hinterfragt werden kann und deshalb zu einer Entscheidung nötigt.”

⁶ Collins 99.

⁷ A. R. Brown, *The Cross and Human Transformation. Paul’s Apocalyptic Word in 1 Corinthians* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995) 90–1.

⁸ Either a present (e.g. ἔστε, εἰσίν, Lietzmann 10; Lindemann 49) or a past tense (ἐκλήθησαν or ἦσαν, Fee 79; Thiselton 179) must be supplied. Verse 26b probably refers to the past situation of their calling in 26a, so that the past tense is to be preferred. Still, the lack of a verb tense also suggests that the condition of their past calling is relevant today.

⁹ Kammler, *Kreuz*, 131–2.

particular social context determined their previous experience as people of no account. These values were evidently still acutely felt in the church. God's election completely disregards those values. "In calling out a people for his name God showed no regard for any prerogatives they may have had. Indeed, in calling *them* he chiefly chose those who are a living contradiction to those values."¹⁰

When Paul writes that the wise will be brought to shame, he does not mean shame in the social sense, determined by the values of Greco-Roman society. 'Shame' needs to be understood of the light of the judgment (1:18a, 19), as an assessment that is soon to be revealed. This sense is confirmed by the eschatological term 'to do away with' (καταργέω) in the third line.¹¹ The verb καταργέω takes the place that καταισχύνω has in the first two lines of the extended parallelism. It indicates that "in Christ God has already set the future in motion, whereby the present age is 'on its way out.'"¹² That they will be put to shame means that the wise and powerful will stand with nothing to rely on 'before God' (ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ). Not only 'boasting' in v.29, but the complete sentence of vv. 27-29, including 'shaming,' is to be seen in the light of that final phrase.

Thiselton argues that Paul's speech of 'shaming' must be understood both from the perspective of Greco-Roman society and from the view of biblical tradition.¹³ But for Paul the two perspectives do not intermingle; they stand side by side. In his rhetorical reasoning the apostle seeks to convince his readers that they are no longer determined by the honor-shame values of society. Therefore Paul's 'shame' is not what society considers 'shame.' That the wise and the powerful will be put to shame, does not mean that they will lose their esteem in society. The 'wise according to the flesh' remain wise in the eyes of the world. Likewise, the 'weak' and 'foolish' readers remain what they were in the eyes of the world. Their election does not take away their experience of social or cultural shame. This is the very point Paul emphatically makes about himself in 4:8-13 and applies to the Corinthians by saying, "be imitators of me" (4:16). This idea persists throughout the letter and is expressed in exemplary fashion in 7:17-24, where the apostle argues that a different and greater freedom in Christ (7:2-23) has not changed the social status of believers.

Neither does he announce a reversal on the social-cultural level so that the despised become highly respected. Instead, he presents a radical redefinition of the status

¹⁰ Fee 79 (cursive his).

¹¹ The verb καταργέω is rare in the gospels (only Luke 13:7) and in the Septuagint. It occurs only in 2 Esdras (4:21,23; 5:5; 6:8) for the efforts of an opposition 'to stop' (NETS) the building of the temple. Paul, however, uses the word frequently, on the one hand in the sense of being set free from a sinful life (Rom 6:6) or from the law (Rom 7:2) or even becoming disconnected from Christ (Gal 5:4). On the other hand, in 1 Corinthians he uses the word in an "intensely eschatological sense," as is apparent from 2:6; 6:13; 13:8, 10; 15:24, 26. Cf. Conzelmann 72, n. 22; Barrett 58; Wilckens, *Weisheit*, 42.

¹² Fee 83; For the same emphasis on the eschatological-critical sense in both καταισχύνω and καταργέω cf. Schrage 211-2 and Wilckens, *Weisheit*, 42;

¹³ Thiselton 187-8, adding the distinction between Roman shame as 'loss of face' and biblical shame as 'guilt.' But both the social concept of disrepute and the moral concept of 'guilt' are not the issue here.

of the foolish, weak, and those of no account ‘before God.’ “The Corinthians define themselves according to human standards, ‘according to the flesh’; Paul defines them according to God’s wisdom.”¹⁴ The final contrast in v.28 presents the ultimate way to define reality in a Hellenistic context, that is, in terms of being.¹⁵ The purpose of 1 Cor 1:26–31 is to persuade the readers not to define themselves ‘according to the flesh’ from the perspective of ‘this world,’ but to see themselves (‘according to the Spirit’)¹⁶ as those who are ‘in Christ.’ Their redefinition depends on the redefinition of wisdom that occurs in 1:30. Wisdom here has a new meaning compared to the early part of Paul’s argument: true wisdom is found in Christ.

1.3 The position of the quotation

This short exploration of the explicit quotation stays on the level of the New Testament text. The quotation in 1:31 is made explicit with the introductory formula καθὼς γέγραπται. Its position is the end of the pericope and the preceding conjunction ἵνα indicate that it gives expression to a final purpose. In fact, the text offers two purposes, one negative and one positive: that no one should boast before God (v.29), and that whoever boasts should boast in the Lord (v.31). Yet the first purpose is subservient to the second. The impact of the earlier verses 27–28 contributes to the purpose expressed in verse 31.

The meaning of the quotation fits so well in the new context that without καθὼς γέγραπται one would hardly recognize it as a quotation. Furthermore, its words are essential to the argument. We argued in the previous chapter that the argument of 1:18–25 would remain clear even if the verses 19–20 with their explicit and implicit quotations were left out. These earlier quotations gave a deeper meaning and a sharper focus but were not indispensable for the argument. Something different is the case in 1:26–31: leaving out the quotation robs the pericope of its climax.

Even though the meaning of the quotation blends perfectly with the new context, its phrasing marks something of a quotation threshold. The present participle ὁ καυχώμενος, with its general character, recalls the language of proverbial wisdom (cf. with καυχάομαι, Prov 25:14; Sir 38:25; with other verbs, Prov 11:26–29 etc.). The

¹⁴ Collins 99; Baumann, *Mitte*, 130.

¹⁵ The substantival participle τὰ ὄντα has the connotation of that which partakes in reality to the highest degree. This connotation clings e.g. to LXX Ex 3:14 where the God of Israel is called ὁ ὢν. ‘Being’ is the highest there is in Greek philosophy and non-being is the very lowest. If it is said now that God has chosen τὰ μὴ ὄντα in order to bring to nothing τὰ ὄντα, the climax of 1:26–28 is reached, at least from the Hellenistic perspective. From the Hebrew perspective 1:29 is the climax, because πᾶσα σὰρξ is the sum total of human life, all of which, as creaturely reality, is positioned ‘before God.’ Several exegetes point to Rom 4:17, “who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist” (καλοῦντος τὰ μὴ ὄντα ὡς ὄντα). In that text God’s act of justification is placed in parallel with his act of creation. It appears that Paul intends the same here with regard to election of ‘the things that are not’ (Wilckens, *Weisheit*, 43; Schrage 212).

¹⁶ This will be unfolded in 2:1–16, cf. πνευματικῶς (2:14).

combination of the participle and a verb of the same stem also occurs in wisdom literature.¹⁷ However, the expression *καυχάομαι ἐν κυρίῳ* is unusual. One may boast in many things but this text says that it is also possible to boast in the Lord. While in a text of Scripture κύριος refers to YHWH, here ἐν κυρίῳ takes on the meaning ‘in the Lord Jesus Christ,’ because of the preceding ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ (v.30). The exceptional phrasing of 1:31 adds to the saying’s striking character. The quotation is demarcated from what follows by the first person narrative of 2:1.

2 Scripture

2.1 Topoi

The fact that 1 Cor 1:26–31 contains only one citation, does not exhaust its relationship with Scripture. Even when there are no further (explicit or implicit) citations referring to particular passages, a number of themes or motifs remind the reader of Scripture. We deal with them under this rubric of *topoi*.

Election

The expression “God chose” (1:27–28) activates intertextual awareness and a natural place to turn to for the motif of election is Deut 7:6–7, the *locus classicus* on Israel’s election.¹⁸ 1 Cor 1:27–28 shares more than the verb ‘elect’ with this passage because Deuteronomy contains the motif that YHWH did not choose Israel because it had a certain status among the nations. Instead “you were the fewest of all peoples (Deut 7:7).” Deuteronomy 7 emphasizes the gratuitousness of God’s choice. Election rejects the idea that a) the relationship with the deity exists by nature and not by divine choice, and b) that this divine choice was the natural choice.¹⁹

Moreover, additional verbal agreements with 1 Cor 1–2 are found in LXX Deut 7:7–9: “Know therefore that the Lord your God is God, the faithful God (θεὸς πιστός, cf. 1 Cor 1:9) who maintains covenant loyalty with those who love him (τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτὸν, cf. 1 Cor 2:9). All these elements: election, its gratuitousness, the faithfulness of God, and the phrase ‘those who love him’ feature in 1 Cor 1–4. Still, because these elements are not unique but found throughout Scripture and because they surface in 1 Cor 1–4 in a rather dispersed manner, we cannot speak of an implicit citation from Deut 7. Election is to be regarded as a *topos* especially characteristic for Israel’s Scripture.²⁰ We

¹⁷ E.g. Prov 10:9; 12:1 ὁ ἀγαπῶν παιδεῖαν ἀγαπᾷ αἴσθησιν.

¹⁸ Baumann, *Mitte*, 128; T.C. Vriezen, *De Verkiezing van Israël volgens het Oude Testament* (Bolland: Amsterdam, 1974) 34.

¹⁹ Cf. P van Imschoot, *Théologie de l’Ancien Testament* 1 (Paris: Desclée, 1954) 269.

²⁰ H. Wildberger, “בַּחֵר,” *THAT* 1:283: “Von einem gewissen Zeitpunkt an wird im AT nicht nur von der Erwählung des Königs, sondern auch von der Erwählung des Volkes gesprochen, was ein Novum innerhalb der Religionsgeschichte des Alten Orients bildet. Der Gedanke der Sonderstellung Israels zu Jahwe ist für seinen Glauben geradezu konstitutiv.”

note that the influence of Scripture in the letter is not restricted to explicit or implicit citations and that Scripture gives Paul a theological and literary frame of thought.

The poor

Isa 29:19 singles out the poor (LXX πτωχοί, MT עֲנִיִּים) as the one ones who will rejoice in the Lord. 1 Cor 1:27–28 lists the foolish, the weak, the despised, and those who count for nothing as the ones who are the object of God’s election. This choice is in line with the election of Israel in Deuteronomy 7. They are a small people that receives the place of “seven nations mightier and more numerous than you” (Deut 7:1). This divine choice in contrast with human preferences, continues throughout Israel’s history, even in the appointment of Israel’s leaders, e.g. Deborah (Judg 4:4), Gideon (Judg 6:15), and David (1 Sam 16:7). After the establishment of the monarchy, it is kingly descent or a high position in the army that paves the way to leadership. Priestly offices are a family affair as well. Only prophets sometimes declare that they are called by God from obscure origins (e.g. Amos 7:14).

This pattern also turns up in the collective sense with the idea of the remnant (cf. Isa 6:12, 7:3 MT, 37:31, etc.) The remnant is referred to in Isa 14:32 as “the poor of his people” (MT עֲנִיֵּי עַמּוֹ, LXX ταπεινοὶ τοῦ λαοῦ).²¹ Especially those who are deprived of their rights (5:23; 29:21) and suffer from the tyranny of unjust rulers (Isa 29:20–21), or from the greed of the rich (5:8), are the object of God’s concern. The action of God toward the despised in Corinthian society has its roots in God’s dealings in Israel’s history.

Shame

When 1 Cor 1:27 speaks of shaming the wise and the strong (ἵνα καταισχύνῃ τοὺς σοφοὺς and ἵνα καταισχύνῃ τὰ ἰσχυρά) are we then dealing with a *topos* of Scripture or can we point to a particular passage? The first seems to be the case. The Hebrew root בּוֹשׁ comes forward as a significant term with the eighth century prophets and indicates the public condition of a person, a city, a people, or a profession that has fallen from the position it was proud of.²² But shaming also plays a role in the context of the two explicit quotations in 1 Cor 1.

Deliverance from shame is one side of the picture. Isa 29:22–23 says that a renewed and true worship will preserve the people from shame: “Jacob shall not be ashamed now” (LXX), and Isa 28:16 states that faith in the foundation stone will save from shame: “he who believes in him will not be ashamed (οὐ μὴ καταισχύνθῃ). The other side of deliverance from shame is undergoing shame. Isa 30:3 says that trust in a deceptive helper will result in shame: “the shelter of Pharaoh shall become a shame for you” (LXX εἰς αἰσχύνην, MT לְבִשְׁתָּ; likewise in 30:5, cf. 20:5). Finally, the combination in 1 Cor 1:27 of shame and wise men finds a precedent in Jer 8:9. This verse belongs to the wider

²¹ κύριος ἐθεμελίωσεν Σιών, καὶ δι’ αὐτοῦ σωθήσονται οἱ ταπεινοὶ τοῦ λαοῦ.

²² Cf. H. Seebass, “בוֹשׁ,” *TWAT* 1:571.

context of the explicit quotation from Jer 9:22-23 and states that the wise will be ashamed (ἡσχύνθησαν σοφοί).

Boasting

The direct connection between καυχάομαι in 1 Cor 1:29-31 and Scripture is the quotation from Jer 9:22-23 (LXX). However, boasting and being ashamed can be two sides of the same coin in Scripture. For example, Ψ 96:7 says that those who boast in idols, will be put to shame.²³ Someone who boasts has great confidence, but his ground of confidence can be deceptive, so that his trust becomes a complete disappointment. He is left standing ashamed. E. Fuchs noted that καυχάομαι is not very common in the Septuagint.²⁴ Moreover, in LXX Isaiah the verb καυχάομαι and the cognate terms (καύχημα and καύχησις) are not found at all and seem to have been systematically ignored.²⁵ That does not mean, however, that with regard to 'boasting' no relationships with Isaiah exist.

Two directions in the area of boasting surface in LXX Isa 28:1-5. The chapter begins with the crisis of Ephraim's leadership: it has become a "flower fallen from its glory." In 28:1 a woe-declaration, familiar from 29:15 (cf. 5:21; 30:1; 31:1, etc.), addresses the proud dignitaries (Οὐαὶ τῷ στεφάνῳ τῆς ὑβρεως). Isa 28:3 proclaims their fall: their crown of pride (στέφανος τῆς ὑβρεως) will be trampled under foot. Then 28:5 prophesies a new hope by speaking of a different crown, the crown of hope, in the person of the Lord of hosts (τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ ἔσται κύριος σαβαωθ ὁ στέφανος τῆς ἐλπίδος). The Lord will be in the near future for the remnant "the crown of hope, which is woven of glory," so that the δόξα of verse 1 finds its counterpart in the δόξα of verse 5. The text moves from one στέφανος to another, from "the crown of pride" (28:1, 3) to the "crown of hope" (28:5).²⁶ Here again a contrast emerges between human leaders and the Lord.²⁷ Targum Jonathan applies Isa 28:5 to the Messiah: "in that time the Messiah of the Lord of hosts will be a diadem of joy and a crown of praise, to the remnant of his people."

²³ αἰσχυνθήτωσαν πάντες οἱ προσκυνοῦντες τοῖς γλυπτοῖς, οἱ ἐγκαυχώμενοι ἐν τοῖς εἰδώλοις αὐτῶν.

²⁴ E. Fuchs, "Gloire de Dieu, gloire de l'homme. Essai sur les termes *kauchasthai*, *kauchèma*, *kauchèsis* dans la Septante," *RTP* 27 (1977). LEH counts 25 occurrences in the books belonging to the Hebrew canon and 41 in the LXX as a whole. Besides καυχάομαι, ἐγκαυχάομαι occurs four times, all in LXX Psalms, three times in a bad sense (Ψ 51:1; 73:4, and 96:7) and once in a good sense (Ψ 105:47). Of its three LXX instances of κατακαυχάομαι has a bad sense in Jer 27:11, 38 and a good sense in Zech 10:12. 'Good sense' means in these places 'theocentric.'

²⁵ Fuchs, "Gloire," 326. This is not the case with Aquila (2 instances), Theodotion (3), and Symmachus (2).

²⁶ MT has the lexical equivalent עֲטָרָה in each of the three verses.

²⁷ G.R. Driver summarizes Isa 28:1-6 as follows: "Then the true glory of a nation, the prophet says, will not be its rulers garlanded with flowers, drenched in perfumes, swilling down strong drink, but the Lord of hosts who, when the crisis is past, will show himself a nation's 'lovely garland' and 'beautiful diadem,' the source of justice and martial virtues for those who survive (5-6)." (G.R. Driver, "Another little drink'- Isaiah 28:1-22" in *Words and Meanings* [ed. P.R. Ackroyd and B. Lindars; Cambridge: University Press, 1968] 63).

Thus, the context of the words quoted in 1 Cor 1:19 evidences the idea of two opposite forms of boasting, one in human leaders and one in the Lord.

Finally, ‘trusting in’ is an expression that belongs to the semantic field of ‘boasting.’ For example, the synthetic parallelism in Ψ 48:7 presents ‘trusting’ as the equivalent of ‘boasting’:²⁸ “those who trust in their power and boast of the abundance of their riches.” In this verse, power and riches function as the grounds of trusting and boasting. Elsewhere we read that people may trust or boast in idols.²⁹ LXX Isaiah does not use the verb *καυχάομαι* but this is amply compensated by the version’s liking for *πεποιθώς εἶναι*. This construction conveys a number of Hebrew terms,³⁰ a translation practice that is particularly evident in the chapters 28–33.³¹ We read that the people trust ‘in falsehood’ (28:17), ‘in Egypt’ (30:3), ‘in vain things’ (30:15), and ‘in horses and in chariots’ (31:1). In the next two chapters this dependence changes: “then no longer will they trust in men” (32:3), and “O Lord, have mercy on us, for we trust in you” (33:2). With the terminology of ‘trusting’ Isa 28–33 instructs its readers that there are two sources of confidence, and that the right one is the Lord.

All flesh

‘All flesh’ is a common expression in the Hebrew Bible and in the Septuagint. Paul uses *πᾶσα σὰρξ* (1:29) in connection with justification in Gal 2:16 and Rom 3:20, where the expression is probably an adaptation of *πᾶς ζῶν* from Ψ 142:2 (*כָּל-חַי* in Ps 143 MT). In these verses the works of the law are no basis to be justified and in the same way in 1 Cor 1:29 being wise, strong, and well-born are no reason to boast. *Πᾶσα σὰρξ* functions in these verses as an inclusive formula that lumps all men together. When we look at LXX Isaiah we find a number of instances of *πᾶσα σὰρξ*: in 40:5–6, 49:26 (“all flesh shall perceive that I am the Lord”), and 66:16, 23 (all flesh shall come before me to do obeisance”), 24. The book ends in 66:24 with the words *πάσῃ σαρκί*.

The use of ‘all flesh’ in Isa 40:5–6 corresponds with 1 Cor 1:29, when it says, “all flesh is grass and all the glory of man (*πᾶσα δόξα ἀνθρώπου*, MT *וְכָל-הַכְסֵּדוֹ*) as the flower of grass.”³² A closer look reveals that ‘flesh’ and ‘glory’ in LXX Isa 40:5–6 are presented in a chiasmic structure:

δόξα κυρίου – πᾶσα σὰρξ – πᾶσα σὰρξ – δόξα ἀνθρώπου.

²⁸ οἱ πεποιθότες ἐπὶ τῇ δυνάμει αὐτῶν καὶ ἐπὶ τῷ πλήθει τοῦ πλούτου αὐτῶν καυχόμενοι; MT *הַבְּטִיחִים עַל-חַיִּלָּם וּבְרֹב עֲשָׂרָם יִתְהַלָּלוּ*.

²⁹ E.g. LXX Isa 42:17 speaks of shame as the result of ‘trusting’ in graven images (αἰσχύνθητε αἰσχύνην, οἱ πεποιθότες ἐπὶ τοῖς γλυπτοῖς).

³⁰ R. Bultmann, ‘πεῖθω,’ *TWNT* 6:5; cf. HR s.v. *πεῖθειν* (14).

³¹ The hapax *חֲסוּת* in 30:3, and *מְחֻסָּה* in 28:17 – elsewhere rendered ἔλπις – of the verb *חָסָה* ‘seek refuge,’ as well as *קָוָה* ‘wait,’ ‘long for,’ is only in LXX Isa (8:17; 33:2) interpreted as *πέποιθα*. *שַׁעַר* ‘look for help’ is also translated with *πέποιθα* in Isa 32:3. The word *שְׁאֵנָה* ‘careless,’ ‘overconfident’ (32:11), as description of well-to-do women who trust in their riches, reads *πεποιθυῖαι* in the LXX.

³² καὶ πᾶσα ὡς ἄνθος χόρτου.

‘All flesh’ (humanity) relates to two forms of glory, on the one side ‘the glory of God’ (40:5a),³³ on the other side the ‘glory of man’ (LXX 40:6). By not only translating the כבוד of God (v.5) with δόξα, but also the כבוד of man (v.6) with this term, and by reading ἀνθρώπου instead of mere αὐτοῦ³⁴ the Septuagint intensifies the contrast between God and man. Glory can be sought in two directions: either in the frail beauty of man or in the hidden awesomeness of God. These two forms of glory appear in LXX Isa 40:5–6 as two alternatives. This corresponds with the two alternative forms of δόξα in Isa 28:1 and 5 (see ‘Boasting’ above). After the discussion of a number of *topoi* we now turn to the quotations.

2.2 The Quotation in 1 Cor 1:31

Jer 8-10: questioning the wise

Even though Jer 9:22–23, as the source of the second explicit quotation in 1 Cor 1–4, forms a relatively independent pericope, it is worthwhile to consider the relevance of the larger context consisting of Jeremiah chapters 8–10. The verses 8:8–9 are said to be “the nearest example of boasting by the wise.”³⁵ Jer 8:8 not only addresses persons who consider themselves ‘wise,’ but also mentions ‘scribes,’ so that we find two designations of 1 Cor 1:20, ‘wise’ and ‘scribe,’ in this text combined.³⁶

1 Cor 1:20 asks “Where is the wise man?” and “where is the scribe?” as a reflection of the text of Isaiah but questioning the wise occurs also in Jer 8–10. In Jer 8:8 we read “How will you say, ‘We are wise?’ (πῶς ἐρεῖτε ὅτι σοφοὶ ἐσμεν ἡμεῖς),” and in 8:9, “What wisdom is in them? (σοφία τίς ἐστὶν ἐν αὐτοῖς).” Furthermore, in the next chapter of Jeremiah we hear in the MT, “Who is the wise man?” (Jer 9:12, מִי־הָאִישׁ הַחָכָם) or in the LXX, “who is the intelligent person? (τίς ὁ ἄνθρωπος ὁ συνετός).” This question is followed by the words, “Let him also understand this (συνέτω τοῦτο).” A similar question appears at the close of Ψ 106:43 and at the end of Hos 14:10 (τίς σοφὸς καὶ συνήσει ταῦτα), indicating that wisdom is the ability to understand what God has spoken. The same is true for Jer 8:8–9 and 9:12–13. These verses emphasize acceptance of the word or law of the Lord as a prerequisite for being called wise.

Accordingly, the reason for the failure of the wise is their rejection of the word of the Lord. The verb ἀποδοκιμάζω (‘reject’) is characteristic for LXX-Jeremiah; in this

³³ The statement in MT 40:5b that “all flesh will see the glory of the Lord” is very bold, even more so in connection with the saying in 40:6 that “all flesh is grass.” The LXX apparently hesitates to combine flesh and divine glory because it says that “the *salvation* of God,” is what “all flesh will see.” Another place in LXX Isa with τὸ σωτήριον τοῦ θεοῦ is 38:11. Here also the MT speaks directly of seeing the Lord (cf. I.L. Seeligmann, *The Septuagint Version of Isaiah* [Leiden: Brill, 1948], 115).

³⁴ MT כְּל־חֲסִדוֹ; Aq, Sym, and Theod. πᾶν τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ.

³⁵ G. Fischer, *Jeremia 1–25* (Freiburg: Herder, 2005) 368.

³⁶ “How will you say, ‘We are wise, and the law of the Lord is with us?’ A false pen has become of no use to scribes” (LXX).

book the verb occurs 7 times out of 10 times in the Septuagint as a whole.³⁷ While LXX Jer 8:8 relates the intimate connection between wisdom and the word of the Lord in a rather obscure way, 8:9 expresses it openly. We conclude that in the context of Jer 9:22–23, adherence to the word or law of the Lord is made into a criterion for wisdom.³⁸

Jer 9:22–23 (LXX and MT; 9:23–24 Eng.)

The extent of the passage Jer 9:22–23 is not difficult to determine because “the lack of connection between vv. 22–23 and what precedes it or follows it is striking.”³⁹ Nevertheless, the content of Jer 9:22–23 is not foreign to the wider context.⁴⁰ ‘Knowledge’ and ‘wisdom’ play a central role in Jeremiah’s chapters 8–10 (cf. 8:7, 8–9, 12; 9:2, 5, 11, 16; 10:23–24, 25). The wisdom-flavour of 9:23–24 is matched by wisdom-like forms in these chapters: analogy (8:6–7), admonition (9:3–4), and rhetorical questions (8:4–5, 8–9, 12, 19, 23; 9:11).⁴¹ Jer 10:6–7 (MT; missing in the LXX) is the only text in Jeremiah where wisdom is directly attributed to YHWH.⁴² Jer 9:22–23 also agrees with the wider context of Jer 8–10 in the employment of the term wisdom. The adjective חָכָם occurs in the Hebrew text of Jeremiah 11 times and it is striking that 7 of those instances are found in chapters 8–10 (8:8, 9; 9:11, 16, 22; 10:7, 9). Four of these have as equivalent in the LXX σοφός (8:8, 9; 9:17, 22), one has συνετός (9:11), while the last two are missing because MT 10:6–10 is lacking in the LXX. In LXX Jer 8–10 we find the noun σοφία in three places (8:9; 9:22; 10:12) out of six instances in the whole of Jeremiah.

The saying is introduced and concluded as a word of the Lord, which gives it authority in addressing the leading circles of society.⁴³ In the words of Brueggemann, the prophet “challenges the foundations of the establishment credo,” and has the intention to “discredit and dismantle the epistemology of the regime.”⁴⁴ Jer 9:22–23 makes clear that a choice must be made between two visions of life, the one dominant and reinforcing the governing view of reality, the other weak but the true hope for the future.⁴⁵ In addressing society the prophet focuses on the influential circles that possess the intellectual, social,

³⁷ The verb occurs once in the book of Psalms in the saying on the stone that has been rejected by the builders (λίθον, ὃν ἀπεδοκίμασαν οἱ οἰκοδομοῦντες, Ψ 117:22).

³⁸ Elsewhere in Scripture the law is also a sign of wisdom (Deut 4:6) and in later wisdom writings the law becomes the very place where wisdom is found (cf. Bar 3:14–15 with 3:37–4:1 and Sir 24:1–8 with 23).

³⁹ W.A. McKane, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Jeremiah. Volume 1* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1986) 213; MT also has a *setuma* at the beginning and at the end of the passage.

⁴⁰ Even the immediate context may play a role intertextually because Jer 9:24–25 reduces Israel and the nations to a common denominator just like 1 Cor 1:22–24 does.

⁴¹ W. Brueggemann, “The Epistemological Crisis of Israel’s Two Histories,” in *Israelite Wisdom* (ed. J.G. Gammie, et al.; Missoula: Scholars Press, 1978) 89–91.

⁴² M. Gilbert, “Jérémie en Conflit avec les Sages?” in *Le Livre de Jérémie* (ed. P.-M. Bogaert; Leuven: University Press, 1981) 109.

⁴³ Cf. Fischer, *Jeremia 1–25*, 367.

⁴⁴ Brueggemann, “Crisis,” 95.

⁴⁵ Brueggemann, “Crisis,” 90.

and material resources to set the tone and to decide about the country's future. The mix of boasting in wisdom, power and riches amounts to what we might call an ideology and we may say that the text severely criticizes the ideology of Israel's leading circles.

Yet the prophet's own stance is not a class-ideology for his critique covers the people as a whole. He does not restrict "they do not know the way of the Lord," to the privileged but applies it to both the 'rich' (ἄδρoί, 'men of might') and the 'poor' (πτωχοί, LXX Jer 5:4-5),⁴⁶ to the shepherds and to the flock (10:21).⁴⁷ Moreover, Jeremiah's concern is not foremost the particular nature of their ground of boasting, but the fact that with their boasting the leaders and the people have turned away from their God. The prophet's critique of society is not a goal in itself but it serves the goal of a return to the knowledge of the Lord.

LXX Jer 9:22-23

22 Τάδε λέγει κύριος
Μὴ καυχάσθω ὁ σοφὸς ἐν τῇ σοφίᾳ
αὐτοῦ, καὶ μὴ καυχάσθω ὁ ἰσχυρὸς ἐν τῇ
ἰσχύϊ αὐτοῦ,
καὶ μὴ καυχάσθω ὁ πλούσιος ἐν τῷ
πλούτῳ αὐτοῦ,
23 ἀλλ' ἢ ἐν τούτῳ καυχάσθω ὁ
καυχώμενος, συνίειν καὶ γινώσκειν ὅτι
ἐγὼ εἰμι κύριος ποιῶν ἔλεος καὶ κρίμα
καὶ δικαιοσύνην ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς,
ὅτι ἐν τούτοις τὸ θέλημά μου, λέγει
κύριος.

22 This is what the Lord says:
Let not the wise boast in his wisdom,
and let not the mighty boast in his might,
and let not the wealthy boast in his wealth,
23 but let him who boasts boast in this:
that he understands and knows
that I am the Lord when I do mercy and
justice and righteousness in the earth,
because in these things is my will, says the
Lord.

MT Jer 9:22-23

22 כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה
אֲל־יִתְהַלֵּל חָכָם בְּחָכְמָתוֹ
וְאֲל־יִתְהַלֵּל הַגִּבּוֹר בְּגִבּוּרָתוֹ
אֲל־יִתְהַלֵּל עָשִׁיר בְּעֶשְׂרוֹ:

23 כִּי אִם־בְּזֹאת יִתְהַלֵּל הַמִּתְהַלֵּל
הַשֶּׁכֶל וַיֵּדַע אוֹתִי
כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה עֹשֶׂה חֶסֶד מִשְׁפָּט וְצִדְקָה
בְּאֶרֶץ

כִּי־בְאֵלֶּה חַפְצֵי נַאֲמ־יְהוָה:

22 Thus says the Lord:
Do not let the wise boast in their wisdom,
do not let the mighty boast in their might,
do not let the wealthy boast in their
wealth;
23 but let those who boast boast in this,
that they understand and know me,
that I am the Lord;
I act with steadfast love, justice and
righteousness in the earth,
For in these things I delight, says the Lord.

Jer 9:22-23 (in LXX and MT) is a unique place within the Septuagint version of the prophets, because the verb καυχάομαι occurs only here. U. Heckel concludes after a

⁴⁶ "Gemeinsam (ὁμοθυμαδόν) haben sie das Joch zerbrochen" (Jer 5:5, LXX-D).

⁴⁷ "Because the shepherds played the fool (ἡφρονεύσαντο) and did not seek out the Lord, therefore the whole pasture did not comprehend (ἐνόησε), and they were scattered" (LXX Jer 10:21).

survey of καυχάομαι in Greek literature that καυχάομαι ('to boast,' 'sich rühmen') tends to have a negative connotation. From the neutral sense 'to be proud of' it often became 'to vaunt oneself.'⁴⁸ This negative understanding appears also in Christian writings.⁴⁹ At an earlier stage, however, the Septuagint has much room for a positive meaning. There are things, situations, or qualities in which one may boast. This is particularly evident in Sirach, where the verb καυχάομαι occurs rather frequently (9 times out of 41 in the LXX) and often in a positive sense.⁵⁰ In Sirach we read that a scribe may properly boast in the law (39:8), Elijah can boast in his wondrous deeds (48:4), a father will boast about his son (30:2), and wisdom will boast before the power of the Most High (24:2).

Jer 9:22-23 opens with the admonition *not* to boast. In classical literature 'boast not', aims to relativize claims concerning prestige based on possessions, etc., but an alternative is not proposed.⁵¹ Jeremiah, however, does present an alternative and 1 Cor 1:31 quotes Jeremiah's alternative explicitly. The manner in which both Paul and Jeremiah use the term shows that for them καυχάομαι is positive or negative depending on its ground.⁵² The act and the ground of boasting are very closely related.⁵³ Therefore, all depends on the complement the verb καυχάομαι receives.

In Jer 9:23 the right kind of boasting is said to consist in "understanding and knowing (LXX συνίειν καὶ γινώσκειν, MT שכל Hi and ידע) that I am the Lord." Boasting is brought together with 'knowing YHWH,' a key concept in the book of Jeremiah.⁵⁴ The phrasing of the LXX ("to know that I am the Lord") lacks one particular significant word in comparison with the Hebrew "to know *me* that I am the Lord" (MT).⁵⁵ Both versions have two verbs to express this knowledge and we may either read "to understand' and 'to know' in parallel, or consider the second subordinate to the first.⁵⁶ This hardly affects our understanding because the verbs do not make distinctions but amplify each other in expressing the same reality. The purpose of employing near-

⁴⁸ U. Heckel, *Kraft in Schwachheit. Untersuchungen zu 2 Kor 10-13* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1993) 159, cf. 145-59.

⁴⁹ E.g. in Ign. *Pol.* 5:2 ἀκαυχησία ('freedom from boasting,' only occurrence, not in LSJ) counts as a positive moral attitude (cf. Ign. *Trall.* 4:1). In Paul καυχάομαι is part of his theological language and in itself neutral; to denote boasting as a wrong moral attitude Paul uses περπερεύομαι in 1 Cor 13:4.

⁵⁰ On the negative side we hear that a person should not boast in his clothes (11:4).

⁵¹ Heckel, *Kraft*, 181, 150-1.

⁵² Cf. for negative boasting: Ψ 96:7 boasting in idols, and Ψ 51:1 in malice. In both cases the LXX has ἐγκαυχάομαι and the MT equivalent is in these verses is הלל Hitp.

⁵³ C. Westermann, "הלל," *THAT* 1:499: "Das rühmen und das, was gerühmt werden soll, wird als Ganzheit verstanden."

⁵⁴ W. Schottroff, "ידע," *THAT* 2:695.

⁵⁵ MT has a combination of "know me," and the *Erkenntnisformel* "know that I am the Lord," while LXX has only the *Erkenntnisformel*. The MT phrasing is unusual and only found elsewhere in Jer 24:7 (See W. Zimmerli, "Erkenntnis Gottes nach dem Buche Ezechiel," in *Gottes Offenbarung* [München: Kaiser, 1963] 41-119, 73-74; E. Kutsch, "Weisheitsspruch und Prophetenwort. Zur Traditionsgeschichte des Spruches Jer 9:22-23," *BZNF* 25 [1981] 161-79).

⁵⁶ Cf. P.C. Craigie, P.H. Kelley, J.F. Drinkard, *Jeremiah 1-25* (Dallas: Word, 1991) 153.

synonyms is not to distinguish between different aspects of knowing, but to indicate its depth and fullness (cf. Isa 41:20 with four verbs).⁵⁷

In the context of chapter 9 and earlier chapters, the text concludes that the people have no knowledge of the Lord. In 4:22 we read “they do not know me” and this statement returns in 9:2(Eng.3) with ‘me’ in emphatic position (“Me they do not know,” LXX, MT). One likewise reads in Jer 9, ἐμὲ οὐκ ἔγνωσαν (LXX Jer 9:2) and οὐκ ἠθέλον εἰδέναι με (9:5). The question therefore arises whether Jer 9:23 can be taken seriously when it calls on people to boast in their knowledge of the Lord. There are three possible responses to this question. 1) The possibility of knowing the Lord is considered to be present, disregarding previous failure. 2) The text is a gnomic sentence, a wisdom-like saying more or less detached from the literary context. 3) This text has an eschatological intention, as seen in 38(LXX 31):34, a verse that speaks of the future, “No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, ‘know the Lord’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest.”

The second and third options are both relevant for our understanding the text. The first part of the text has a wisdom-like, gnomic, character; it mentions three common ways of boasting and one alternative. In its description of the alternative and its being framed as an oracle, the text has a prophetic character. The saying does not finish with “to know that I am the Lord,” but knowing the Lord is explained as knowing his actions. These actions are not restricted to the past or the present but also oriented towards the future through the use of the present participle “who practices (ποιῶν, עֹשֶׂה) mercy, justice and righteousness on the earth.” The combination of “justice and righteousness” (LXX κρίμα καὶ δικαιοσύνην, MT מִשְׁפָּט וְצֶדֶקָה) is common and used both for God and for men (e.g. Jer 22:3). The participial expression “showing mercy” (LXX ποιῶν ἔλεος, MT עֹשֶׂה חֶסֶד), however, is restricted to YHWH.⁵⁸ The grouping of the three nouns in Jer 9:23 (LXX ἔλεος καὶ κρίμα καὶ δικαιοσύνην, MT מִשְׁפָּט חֶסֶד וְצֶדֶקָה) is unique in the Old Testament.

1 Kgdms 2:10

Besides Jer 9:22-23 there is another possible source for the explicit quotation in 1 Cor 1:31, viz. Jeremiah’s near duplicate in 1 Kgdms 2:10.⁵⁹ Even though the text is absent in the Hebrew of 1 Sam 2, a consideration of 1 Kgdms 2 shows that its inclusion makes sense because the song already has wisdom elements.⁶⁰ Most importantly, while καυχάομαι is rare in the LXX, the song includes an instance of the verb in verse 3, in the form μὴ καυχᾶσθε as a prohibition, just like we find it in v.10 three times. After ‘do not

⁵⁷ Cf. Botterweck, “יָדַע,” *TWAT* 3:492.

⁵⁸ Kutsch, “Weisheitsspruch,” 169-70; he mentions as partial exception Gen 24:49.

⁵⁹ The text is lacking in the Hebrew; BHS lists besides the LXX as witnesses by name only three codices of the *Vetus Latina*.

⁶⁰ The presence of verse 10 does not change the song into a meditation on wisdom, as has been remarked by E. Fuchs (“Ainsi le ‘cantique d’Anne’ change de signification: d’un chant exaltant l’espérance messianique des pauvres, la LXX fait une méditation sur la sagesse” [Fuchs, “Gloire,” 327]).

boast,' 2:3 continues with καὶ μὴ λαλεῖτε ὑψηλά, a clause that also agrees with the intent of verse 10. Moreover, "let the mighty not boast in his might" (v.10) is in line with Hannah's song when it claims that God "breaks the bow of the mighty" (v.4). Likewise, "let the rich man not boast in his riches," resumes a motif in verses 7–8 "he makes poor and he makes rich." Thus, when we compare 1 Kgdms 2:10 with LXX Jer 9:22–23, we see many agreements but there are also a number of differences. 1 Kgdms has φρόνιμος and φρονήσει instead of σοφός and σοφία (Jer 9:22), and δυνατός and δυνάμει for ἰσχυρός and ἰσχύι in Jer 9:23.⁶¹ The divergences between Jer 9:23 and the second part of 1 Kgdms 2:10 are yet more significant. These are underlined in the diagram:

1 Kgdms 2:10	Jer 9:23
... ἄλλ' ἢ ἐν τούτῳ καυχάσθω ὁ καυχώμενος, συνίειν καὶ γινώσκειν τὸν κύριον καὶ ποιεῖν κρίμα καὶ δικαιοσύνην ἐν μέσῳ τῆς γῆς	... ἄλλ' ἢ ἐν τούτῳ καυχάσθω ὁ καυχώμενος, συνίειν καὶ γινώσκειν ὅτι ἐγὼ εἰμι κύριος ποιῶν ἔλεος καὶ κρίμα καὶ δικαιοσύνην ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, ὅτι ἐν τούτοις τὸ θέλημά μου, λέγει κύριος.

- 1 Kgdms 2:10 has "to know the Lord" while LXX Jer 9:23 has "to know that I am the Lord." Jeremiah's text is introduced as a word from the Lord (begins with τάδε λέγει κύριος and ends with λέγει κύριος) and as such has the form of first person divine speech. This would not be appropriate in Hannah's song.
- In 1 Kgdms 2:10 man remains subject of the action throughout, while in Jeremiah the active role switches to the Lord. In Hannah's song 'doing justice and righteousness' (ποιεῖν κρίμα καὶ δικαιοσύνην) belongs to man. In Jeremiah it is the Lord who does (κύριος ποιῶν ...) mercy, and justice, and righteousness.
- Mercy (ἔλεος) does not occur in 1 Kgdms 2:10.
- 1 Kgdms 2:10 has at the end ἐν μέσῳ⁶² τῆς γῆς, while Jer has ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς. It seems that Hannah's song thinks of 'the land' and Jeremiah of 'the earth.'
- Jer 9:23 ends with ὅτι ἐν τούτοις τὸ θέλημά μου, λέγει κύριος; this clause is lacking in 1 Kgdms 2.

Our conclusion is that the quotation in 1 Cor 1:31 most likely finds its origin in Jer 9:22–23 especially because Jeremiah's word choice of σοφός and σοφία recurs in 1 Cor 1:26–27, and the divine work of mercy, judgment and righteousness in Jer 9 corresponds with God's actions in 1 Cor 1:30. Finally, the larger context of Jer 8–10 contributes to the role and meaning of wisdom in Jer 9:22–23 and probably also to the role and meaning of wisdom in 1 Cor 1–4.

⁶¹ This different choice of synonyms may well indicate that 1 Kgdms 2:10 depends on Hebrew Jer 9:22–23.

⁶² The usual equivalent of בתוך (Cf. M. Johannesson, *Der Gebrauch der Präpositionen in der Septuaginta* [Berlin: Weidmann, 1926] 325).

There is one factor, however, which would plead for assigning intertextual influence to 1 Kgdms 2:10: the motif of a divine reversal of conditions in 1 Kgdms 2:1-9. In Hannah's song the Lord makes the mighty weak, the rich poor and the poor rich. This motif is also present in Isa 29:9-16, the context of the first explicit quotation. Connecting the second explicit quotation in 1 Cor 1:31 with 1 Kgdms 2:1-10 would confirm the intertextual influence of this reversal motif. When, finally, 1 Cor 1:26-28 on the foolish, the weak, and the low-born being chosen to shame the wise, the mighty, and the well-born, presents a pattern of reversal, it would seem that the case for a firm link with 1 Kgdms 2 is established. However, a closer reading of 1 Cor 1:26-31 is necessary to find out whether Paul's text also intends a reversal of positions (see 3.1 Election instead of reversal).

3. Reception of Scripture in 1 Cor 1:26-31

3.1 Discontinuity

Transforming Jer 9:23

1 Cor 1:31
 ἵνα καθὼς γέγραπται,
 ὁ καυχώμενος ἐν κυρίῳ καυχάσθω

LXX Jer 9:23

 ἐν τούτῳ καυχάσθω ὁ καυχώμενος,
 συνίειν καὶ γινώσκειν ὅτι ἐγὼ εἰμι κύριος

The quotation in 1 Cor 1:31 follows somewhat awkwardly after ἵνα καθὼς γέγραπται. One may understand this phrase as an ellipse, in that it omits the word 'be fulfilled,' which would result in ἵνα πληρωθῇ καθὼς γέγραπται. Yet this interpretation is unlikely because Paul otherwise does not use the language of fulfilment.⁶³ The best sense is given when ἵνα is connected with καυχάσθω and καθὼς γέγραπται is taken as a parenthesis. That Paul interrupts the sentence with καθὼς γέγραπται indicates the importance of the phrase.

1 Cor 1:31 offers a shortened form of Jer 9:23. According to Stanley "the present wording of 1 Cor 1:31 represents a generalized appropriation of an attractive phrase from Jer 9:23 LXX by Paul himself."⁶⁴ Koch, however, supposes that the clause is not a quotation but a sentence from early Christian teaching, because of the difference in wording and the limited extent of the 'citation.'⁶⁵ Yet, a relationship with the text of Jeremiah has good grounds. Beyond the quoted words themselves, Jer 9:22-23 and 1 Cor 1:26-31 have a significant number of elements in common:

⁶³ This does not mean that the idea of fulfilment is absent in his letters. Cf. U. Luz, *Das Geschichtsverständnis des Paulus* (München: Kaiser, 1968) 67, 51.

⁶⁴ Stanley, *Technique*, 188.

⁶⁵ Koch, *Zeuge*, 35-6.

- The first two collectives in 1 Cor 1:26 (returning in 1:27aβ, 27bβ), τοὺς σοφούς and τὰ ἰσχυρά, agree with the first two subjects in Jer 9:22 (ὁ σοφός and ὁ ἰσχυρός).
- 1 Cor 1:26–28 shares the structure of a threefold parallelism with Jer 9:22 (Μὴ καυχάσθω ὁ σοφὸς ..., καὶ μὴ καυχάσθω ὁ ἰσχυρὸς ..., καὶ μὴ καυχάσθω ὁ πλούσιος ...).⁶⁶
- 1 Cor 1:29 and 31 present a contrast in boasting like Jer 9:22–23, which is “the sole place in Scripture where there is a negative admonition against boasting followed by a positive exhortation to boast.”⁶⁷
- The three substantives⁶⁸ in 1 Cor 1:30 (including δικαιοσύνη), brought about by God (ἄπὸ θεοῦ) reflect the three substantives in Jer 9:23 (including δικαιοσύνη), which are also actions of God.⁶⁹

Several interpreters suggest that the statement, “Christ has become righteousness for us,” in 1 Cor 1:30 alludes to Jer 23:6 MT “the Lord our righteousness” (יהוה צדקינו). This is not very likely, however. Not that the use of a personal name (Ἰωσεδεκ), instead of δικαιοσύνη in LXX Jer 23:6, is a serious objection. The apostle may have had the Hebrew in mind. But the proposal that Paul implicitly cites Jer 23:6 has insufficient footing because a) δικαιοσύνη is not the only gift in 1 Cor 1:30 so that Jer 23:6 only accounts for one of the series and b) that Christ brings righteousness is a basic thought in Paul’s theology (e.g. 1 Cor 6:11, 2 Cor 5:21; Rom 10:3–4; Phil 3:9).⁷⁰ It is more likely that δικαιοσύνη in 1:30 already alludes to the text that will be cited in the next verse (1:31), viz. Jer 9:23, “Let the one who boasts, boast in this, that he understands and knows that I am the Lord who does mercy, and judgment, and *righteousness*.”

Paul’s formula in 1 Cor 1:31 deviates from Jer 9:23 because it is a condensed statement of boasting in the knowledge of the Lord. The meaning of ‘boast in the Lord’ (1 Cor 1:31) is different from ‘boast in understanding and knowing that I am the Lord’ (Jer 9:23). A shift from the pre-text to receptor text has taken place that entails a number of transformations:

- a) A change in form: the short statement is suitable as an easy to memorize dictum. For Paul the statement functions as a motto (cf. 2 Cor 10:17).
- b) A change with regard to κύριος. In Jeremiah it is יהוה, in 1 Cor there is a theoretical possibility that God is meant (θεός in 1:30), but κύριος is the title of Jesus Christ from the outset in the letter (1:3, 7, 8, 9, 10).
- c) A change in person. The Jeremiah saying is put in first person language in accordance with its character as a word of the Lord: “Let him who boasts boast in

⁶⁶ G. O’Day, “Jeremiah 9:22–23 and 1 Corinthians 1:26–31 – a Study in Intertextuality,” *JBL* 109/2 (1990) 259–67.

⁶⁷ H.H.D. Williams, *The Wisdom of the Wise* (Leiden: Brill, 2001) 109.

⁶⁸ The keyword σοφία receives special emphasis and is set apart from the three.

⁶⁹ Jeremiah’s final clause “because in these things is my will (ὅτι ἐν τούτοις τὸ θέλημά μου LXX),” can be linked with 1 Cor 1:21 (εὐδόκησεν ὁ θεός; MT Jer 9:23 וְהָיָה כִּי יִשְׁמַח אֱלֹהִים) and 2:7 (προώρισεν ὁ θεός). In Jer 9:23 God’s actions are motivated by his desire and the same is true in the context of 1 Cor 1:30–31.

⁷⁰ C. Wolff, *Jeremia im Frühjudentum und Urchristentum* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1976) 141.

this: that he understands and knows that I am the Lord, who does mercy ...” In 1 Cor 1:31, the apostle speaks about the Lord in third person language.

- d) A change with regard to the work of God/Christ. In Jeremiah the present participle ποιῶν denotes God's faithfulness to the covenant. In the new context boasting in the Lord is boasting in the crucified Messiah, through whom God's benefits have come. 1 Cor 1:30 expresses the intimate connection between κύριος and the gifts of salvation with “Christ Jesus who has become for us wisdom etc.,” and “from God you are in him.”
- e) A change in content: the ground of boasting is no longer knowledge but the Lord. Even though in Jer 9:24 knowledge is not theoretical but experiential and confessional,⁷¹ still its meaning differs markedly from the expression “boast in the Lord.” In the case of Jeremiah, Brueggemann could speak of two epistemologies: one of boasting in one's own wisdom and another that boasts in knowing the reliability of the Lord. But the term ‘epistemologies’ is unsuitable for the kind of boasting presented in 1 Cor 1:29–31 because Jeremiah's phrase ‘to know and understand’ is missing. The formula has become simple and direct: “boast in the Lord.” The quotation has become the climax of the teleological argument of 1 Cor 1:26–31.

Election instead of reversal

In Chapter 8 we have observed a pattern of reversal in Isa 29:9–24. The conditions of 29:9–16 are overturned in 29:17–24. Verse 17 announces a reversal in nature, “Lebanon shall be changed (μετατεθήσεται) like Mount Chermel.” Verse 18 continues with a reversal in the religious and in the social sphere. Blindness (v.10) changes into vision (v.18) and the incapacity to read (vv. 11–12) changes into hearing (v.18). The proud perish (v.20) and the poor will rejoice because of the Lord (v.19). This reversal has an eschatological character in Isa 29 because of the introductory words “is it not yet in a little while ...?” (v.17) and “on that day...” (v.18), together with many verbs in the future tense in 29:17–24.⁷²

A pattern of reversal is also present in 1 Kgdms 2:1–10. In the light of God's decisions (v.3), the mighty become weak, the weak receive might (v.4), the barren women bare children, and the mother of many suffers loss (v.5). Unlike Isa 29 the verbs in this song are in the present tense, so that the actions of God (e.g. κύριος πτωχίζει καὶ

⁷¹ The context in Jeremiah shows that ‘to know the Lord’ may concern (a) practice, and (b) covenant-relationship. a) ‘Knowing the Lord’ indicates knowing the way (Jer 5:4) or the judgments of the Lord (Jer 8:7). This knowing is like the way birds faithfully observe their times of migration (“even the stork in the heavens knows its times” MT Jer 8:7). b) ‘Knowing a god’ means that between a people and a deity a bond has been established in the past. In this sense the prophet speaks to Israel about “other gods that you have not known” (Jer 7:9), and to YHWH about “the nations that do not know you” (Jer 10:25).

⁷² This kind of eschatological reversal also appears in apocalyptic writings in relation to the end of time. The emphasis is clearly on the negative side, on the loss of honour, etc. and not on gain (e.g. 1 En. 46:4–7; 2 Bar. 48:35; 83:10–13).

πλουτίζει, v.7) do not belong to a particular time only. Having the form of a gnomic present, this kind of reversal is not only presented as a way God deals with men but also as a recurring pattern in history (cf. Job 5:11; Sir 10:24;⁷³ Sib. Or. 13:3; Ahiqar 150; Philo, *Somn.* 1:155, etc.). This is the language of wisdom and in this respect, 1 Kgdms 2 differs from the genre of Isa 29.

What about 1 Cor 1:26–29? God elects the foolish, weak, lowborn and despised, so that the wise, mighty, and wellborn are left out and stand ashamed. This sounds like the reversal depicted in 1 Kgdms 2. Yet 1 Cor 1 does not offer a simple pattern of social reversal because the foolish remain foolish in the eyes of the world. God’s calling does not give them the esteem that belongs to the wise, but they receive something else: wisdom, righteousness, etc. *in Christ*. The wise of the world are not deposed, they remain the wise of the world, even though their position is undermined by God’s eschatological action in the cross. A final showdown awaits them in the form of eschatological shame. In the case of social reversal, the weak, etc. are oriented towards the mighty whose positions they receive. The weak in 1 Cor 1:26–29, however, are oriented beyond the relationships of society, towards Christ and God and towards a new community.

1 Cor 1:26–29 comes much closer to Isa 29:17–24 than to 1 Kgdms 2. The letter only differs from Isaiah because what is only announced in Isaiah is given as a reality in 1 Corinthians. Yet, Isa 29 announces these things (with ‘in that day’) as evidence of a turning point in history, while in 1 Cor the existing conditions (of ‘this age’) continue, alongside what has been brought: a new understanding (wisdom), a new existence (in Christ) and a new community.

Hanson and Wilk have seen the reversal of Isa 29:14–24 reflected in 1 Cor 1:18–31 in the election of the foolish, weak, and despised. As we point out here this reversal has to be modified in the sense of election. They have rightly made the reversal completely dependent on the overturning of the world’s values in the event of the cross.⁷⁴ Only because of the foolishness of the cross does the election of the foolish take place. Paul’s letter does not speak in terms of reversal but in terms of election and shame, election of unlikely candidates and shame for the self-satisfied.

⁷³ “Thrones of rulers the Lord brought down, and he seated the gentle in their place (NETS).” The aorists in this verse are better translated with the present tense (NEB; NRSV), because here also a recurring form of divine action is meant (gnomic aorist).

⁷⁴ A.T. Hanson, “The Cross in the End Time,” in *The Paradox of the Cross in the Thought of St Paul* (Sheffield: Academic Press, 1987) 14–15; Wilk, *Bedeutung*, 161.

3.2 Continuity

Twofold boasting

A continuity of meaning of *καυχάομαι* in Jer 9:22-23 and 1 Cor 1:29, 31 is evident. In both texts the verb expresses a *Grundhaltung* revealing someone's final trust and source of confidence. Phil 3:3 illustrates the semantic proximity of boasting and trusting in the parallel expression, "boasting (*καυχώμενοι*) in Christ Jesus and not trusting (*πεποιθότες*) in the flesh." The verb *πείθω* ('to rely on and trust in with confidence,' GELS, s.v. 1), especially the periphrastic use of its perfect participle, plays an important role in LXX Isa 28-33. Its significance for the LXX-Isa translator is apparent from the fact that the verb occurs 16 times in these chapters while representing 8 different roots in the Hebrew. In LXX Isa 31:1 two alternative bases of trust are put forward by means of this verb: trust in Egyptian arms or trust in the Holy One of Israel.⁷⁵ Two alternatives are presented: a community either builds on its own resources in a desire to be independent from God, or it stands in a relation of fundamental reliance on God.

The book of Jeremiah often confronts its readers with a choice between two alternatives (e.g. 7:3-11; 17:5-8; 18:7-10; 22:1-5).⁷⁶ This prophetic pattern of two alternatives also forms the substratum of 1 Cor 1:29-31. This text summarizes the first alternative as "the flesh boasting before God" and calls the second "boasting in the Lord." Boasting in men as a community practice is evident in 1 Cor 1:11-12 and fuels the *λόγος τῶν πεφυσιωμένων* in 4:19. Boasting in the Lord is presented to the readers in the doxologically heightened language of 1:30 and 3:22-23. The rhetorical strategy of 1 Cor 1-4 is to redirect boasting from false supports towards its true ground. The strategy of the argument is not to eradicate boasting but to relocate boasting.

We also note that the two uses of *δόξα* (human and divine) in Isaiah 40:5-6 present a parallel with the two ways of boasting - in humanity or in God - presented by Jeremiah (9:22-23) and in 1 Cor 1:29, 31. While *δόξα* lingers in the background in 1 Cor 1:26-31, it finds expression in 2:8 with a central position in the argument, by naming the crucified Christ, *ὁ κύριος τῆς δόξης* (2:8). There is no need to look for a parallel in apocalyptic writings for this precise phrase,⁷⁷ *δόξα* probably derives from Isaiah.⁷⁸

⁷⁵ οἱ ἐφ' ἵπποις πεποιθότες καὶ ἐφ' ἄρμασιν ... καὶ οὐκ ἦσαν πεποιθότες ἐπὶ τὸν ἅγιον τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ. MT has **בטח** only in the second instance.

⁷⁶ Fischer, *Jeremia*, 61.

⁷⁷ Usually sought in 1 Enoch, cf. Schrage 255; Collins 131.

⁷⁸ Cf. concerning the possibility of a relationship with *Ψ* 23:7-10 (where we find in v.10 *ὁ βασιλεὺς τῆς δόξης* with *κύριος τῶν δυνάμεων*) M. Pesce, *Paolo e gli Arconti a Corinto. Storia della ricerca (1888-1975) ed esegesi di 1 Cor 2,6.8* (Brescia: Paideia, 1977) 425-36.

The δόξα τοῦ θεοῦ is a reality beyond human grasp⁷⁹ but brought near in ‘the Lord of glory’ (1 Cor 2:8). After a poetic parallelism denying all boasting before God (1:27-29), follows a boasting in Christ (ἐν κυρίῳ καυχάσθω 1:31),⁸⁰ who has been interposed by God (ἐξ αὐτοῦ) to give by association (ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ) the believers a share in wisdom (ἐγενήθη σοφία ἡμῖν). A chiasmic structuring in 1:30 underlines that ‘you’/‘we’ are enfolded in God’s action in Christ:

ἐξ αὐτοῦ – ὑμεῖς – Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ / ὅς – ἡμῖν – ἀπὸ θεοῦ.

This emphasis on divine action reflects LXX Jer 9:23: “I am the Lord who brings about mercy, justice, and righteousness on earth.” God is known and understood not apart from but in his actions.

Doxology

Paul summarizes Jeremiah’s alternative with ὁ καυχώμενος ἐν κυρίῳ καυχάσθω. This specific combination of καυχάομαι with ἐν κυρίῳ or ἐν θεῷ is not without precedent in the LXX. In Ψ 5:11 we encounter: “those who love your name will boast in you (καυχήσονται ἐπὶ / ἐν (AB) σοί).⁸¹ It is important to note that καυχάομαι may function in the context of worship, as seen in Ψ 31:11 “boast all you upright in heart,” Ψ 149:5 “the devout will boast in glory,” and 1 Chr 16:35 “boast in your praises.” There is also an example of this use in Sirach 50:20, where the people wait in the temple for the high priest Simon “to give a blessing of the Lord from his lips and to boast in his name (καὶ ἐν ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ καυχήσασθαι).” NRSV has translated καυχάομαι in a concordant manner with ‘boast’ in all these cases but it is evident that ‘exult in,’ or ‘rejoice in,’ or ‘glorify his name’ suits just as well.

J. Schreiner points out that LXX Deut 10:21 probably paved the way for this new application of καυχάομαι, by saying of God οὗτος καύχημά σου, where MT has אֱלֹהֵינוּ תְהִלָּתְךָ (‘He is your praise,’ NRSV; Aq ὕμνησις).⁸² The noun καύχημα also appears in doxologies and the meanings ‘boast’ and ‘praise’ can hardly be kept apart.⁸³ The same is

⁷⁹ By employing δόξα for the divine reality beyond human evaluations the LXX has introduced a very different perspective on δόξα, a term which in Greek thinking with the meaning ‘opinion’ pointed to the human sphere of uncertainty. Cf. G. von Rad, “δόξα,” *TWNT* 2:248, who emphasizes the subjective quality Greek of δόξα over against the objectivity of the divine δόξα in the Septuagint.

⁸⁰ Lindemann 52: “Vielleicht besitzt ἐν κυρίῳ aber auch hier den für Paulus charakteristischen Akzent (‘in Christus,’ d.h. *extra nos*).”

⁸¹ MT: “so that those who love your name may exult in you,” with the verb יִעָלְצוּ בְךָ (עָלַץ). אֱלֹהֵינוּ תְהִלָּתְךָ.

⁸² J. Schreiner, “Jeremia 9,22.23 als Hintergrund des paulinischen ‘Sich-Rühmens,’” in *Neues Testament und Kirche* (ed. J. Gnllka; Freiburg: Herder, 1974) 538-9.

⁸³ Heckel, *Kraft*, 160, καύχημα occurs in doxologies in 1 Chr 16:27 and 29:11, but also in Jer 17:14 for תְהִלָּתְךָ (καύχημά μου σὺ εἶ).

felt in the use of the verb *καυχάομαι*, even in Jer 9:23.⁸⁴ In LXX Psalms *καυχάομαι* sometimes renders verbs expressing joy.⁸⁵ *הלל* Hitp often approaches ‘exult’ or ‘rejoice’.⁸⁶ It is remarkable that in all his letters Paul does not use the verb *ἀγαλλιάομαι*, while it occurs 74 times in the Septuagint and, moreover, rejoicing would be the appropriate response to the arrival of salvation. Bultmann explains this phenomenon by saying that Paul uses *καυχάομαι* instead.⁸⁷ With his use of *καυχάομαι* in 1 Cor 1:31 Paul agrees with and continues the tendency of the Septuagint in the direction of praise.⁸⁸

Paul’s rhetorical strategy in 1 Cor 1:26–31 is visible in the teleological structure of the passage and its doxological finale. Paul wants to persuade the Corinthians to abandon their attitude of boasting in the form of praising the achievements and assets of the flesh. But this abandonment is not meant to leave a vacuum. The text replaces false boasting with a legitimate form of boasting, better still: with the excellent way of boasting that consists in praise. Boasting in the Lord is giving glory to God because of his action of mercy and justice (Jer 9:24) proclaimed by the word of the cross (1 Cor 1:18). This boasting ends division because it unites the whole community in praising God for his mercy given to all in the crucified Messiah.⁸⁹ The community’s consent to the doxological climax of 1:30–31 will fulfil their call to be united in speech in 1:10.

⁸⁴ Heckel, *Kraft*, 165: “JHWH ist der Ruhm dieser Menschen, weil er an ihnen handelt, und erhält dafür ein Lobpreis ebenjener Personen. die beiden Bedeutungen ‘Ruhm’ und ‘Lobpreis’ liegen in diesen doxologischen Aussagen nicht nur sehr nahe beieinander, sondern stehen in einem Wechselverhältnis: JHWH’s Ruhm findet im Lobpreis der Menschen seinen angemessenen Ausdruck. Insofern kommt der positiv gebrauchte Imperativ *καυχᾶσθω* in Jer 9,23 einer Aufforderung zur Anerkennung und zum Lobpreis des gnädigen Handelns Gottes gleich.”

⁸⁵ *עלי* and *עליז*, in *Ψ* 5:12; 93:3; 149:5; also Jer 27(50):11 *κατακαυχᾶσθαι* (Schreiner, “Jeremia 9,22.23,” 540–1).

⁸⁶ E.g. *הלל* Hitp is translated with *εὐφραίνω* in Isa 41:16 and followed by *ἀγαλλιάομαι* in 41:17.

⁸⁷ R. Bultmann, “*ἀγαλλιάομαι*,” *TWNT* 1:20.

⁸⁸ Schreiner, *Jeremia* 9,22–23, 541: “Wenn der Apostel im Rühmen einen Begriff aufgreift, der bereits im Alten Testament eine recht deutliche Vorprägung und Akzentuierung erfahren hat, und ihn zu einer wichtigen Aussage innerhalb seiner Theologie macht, geschieht dies gewiss nicht ohne Überlegung und Absicht. Dann aber muss damit gerechnet werden, dass die alttestamentliche, von der LXX festgeschriebene und erweiterte Sinngebung ...auch in den paulinischen Texten mitschwingt.”

⁸⁹ Heckel, *Kraft*, 181: “Sobald das Heilsgeschehen in Christus an die Stelle der menschlichen Anlässe zum Selbstruhm tritt, verliert *das Sich-Rühmen* seine spaltende Wirkung auf die Gemeinde und *wird zu einer Einheit stiftenden Kraft*.”

Chapter 10: Wisdom and the Spirit (1 Cor 2)

1. Structural and Semantic Features of 1 Cor 2

1.1 Semantic oppositions

Semantic oppositions characterize 1 Cor 2. The author creates a large number of conceptual contrasts in this section, such as σοφία ἀνθρώπων and δύναμις θεοῦ (2:5), σοφία τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου and σοφία θεοῦ (2:6-7), πνεῦμα and ἄνθρωπος (2:13), and πνευματικός and ψυχικός (2:14-15). N. Schneider notes that Paul employs antithetical language in sections that have particular theological significance for him (e.g. Rom 5:12-21; Rom 8; 1 Cor 15; 2 Cor 5).¹ More than half of the antitheses in Paul's letters have the form of two opposing elements that begin with οὐκ and with ἀλλά, a figure that is called *correctio* by Schneider.² This form occurs frequently in 1 Cor 2, as the following list shows:

2:4	οὐκ ἐν πειθοῖ σοφίας	ἀλλ' ἐν ἀποδείξει πνεύματος καὶ δυνάμεως
2:5	μὴ ἐν σοφίᾳ ἀνθρώπων	ἀλλ' ἐν δυνάμει θεοῦ
2:6-7	σοφίαν δὲ οὐ τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου	ἀλλὰ θεοῦ σοφίαν
2:8-9	ἣν οὐδεὶς τῶν ἀρχόντων τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου ἔγνωκεν	ἀλλὰ ... ἃ ἠτοίμασεν ὁ θεὸς
2:12	οὐ τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ κόσμου	ἀλλὰ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ
2:13	οὐκ ἐν διδακτοῖς ἀνθρωπίνης σοφίας λόγοις	ἀλλ' ἐν διδακτοῖς πνεύματος

While *correctio* is present throughout 1 Cor 1:10-4:21,³ the figure has a prominent role in 2:1-16. Spirit is first mentioned in 2:4 as part of a hendiadys with 'power' in its function of convincing the hearers. This function is important for the reception of the kerygma, but the second function in the area of revelation is still more fundamental in the discussion on wisdom.

The following pattern emerges:

	means of reception	content of revelation	agent of revelation	subjects of reception
	2:1-5	2:6-9	2:10-13	2:14-16
not (οὐ[κ])	persuasion (2:4)	the wisdom of this age (2:6)	the spirit of the world (2:12)	natural persons (2:14)

¹ N. Schneider, *Die rhetorische Eigenart der paulinischen Antithese* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1970) 64.

² Schneider, *Eigenart*, 68.

³ 1:17, 27; 2:4, 5, 7, 9, 12, 13; 3:1, 2, 6, 7; 4:3, 4, 14, 15, 19, 20.

but (ἀλλά)	Spirit and power (2:4)	wisdom of God (2:7)	the Spirit of God (2:12)	spiritual persons (2:15)
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The text of 1 Cor 2 starts with a past experience, the first presentation of the gospel in Corinth (2:1-5). In the subsequent text the logical order of revelation would have been from the source (the Spirit) to the gift (wisdom), but the rhetorical order deals first with the wisdom of God (2:6-9) and then with the Spirit of God in 2:10-16. The text first reveals the hidden wisdom of God (2:7) and then discloses the origin of this wisdom (2:10). This rhetorical strategy catches the attention of the reader for that which is closest to his concerns (wisdom) and moves from its disclosure to its origin. The Spirit of God turns out to be the final decisive factor for all those who desire wisdom.

Both 'the wisdom of God' and 'the Spirit of God' have an opposite ('the wisdom of this age' in 2:6 and 'the spirit of the world' in 2:12), but the preamble on wisdom in 2:6 and the amount of attention wisdom receives in 2:7-9 show that the central antithesis remains 'wisdom of this age' versus 'wisdom of God.' That the Spirit of God also receives an opposite has a rhetorical function and does not play a significant role in the argument. The same is true for the use of the term ψυχικοί, referring to people *without* the Spirit and not to people with a different spirit (e.g. 'the spirit of the world').

1.2 Cognitive language

Significant is the intensive use of the language of cognition. We encounter the words εἰδέναι (v.2), ἔγνων and ἔγνωσαν (v.8), ἔραυνᾶ (v.10), οἶδεν and ἔγνων (v.11), εἰδῶμεν (v.12), γινῶναι (v.14), ἔγνων, συμβιβάσει, and νοῦς (v.16). Hardly less important is the related ability to distinguish, judge or evaluate in ἔκριναι (v.2), συγκρίνοντες (v.13), ἀνακρίνεται (vv.14,15), and ἀνακρίνει (v.15). This high density of verbs of cognition leaves no doubt that the passage occupies itself with the question of knowing.

But what are the objects of this knowledge? Paul says that during his earlier stay in Corinth he strictly kept in mind "Jesus Christ and him crucified" (2:2). The perspective broadens widely in 2:10 because there 'all things,' 'even the deep things of God,' are searched out. In 2:11 knowledge concerns the things of man and the things of God, in v.13 spiritual things, in v.14 the things of the Spirit of God, and in v.16 the mind of the Lord. Except for the things of man in v.11 that are only mentioned by way of comparison, the objects of knowledge in 2:1-16 are insights which come from God. Even 1 Cor 2:9, introduced as a quotation, deals in its entirety with the object of knowledge.⁴

If this is what the section is all about, then the statement, "to us God has revealed" in v.10 has a key position in this argument. For the possession of this knowledge revelation is indispensable and with an announcement of revelation 1 Cor 2:10 marks a new beginning within 2:6-16. The syntax and semantics show a break between 2:9 and 2:10. The first part 2:1-9 dwells on the particularity of the cross (2:2, 8), and on the

⁴ The order in 1 Cor 2:9-16 is ὃ ὁφθαλμὸς οὐκ εἶδεν ..., ὃ ἠτοίμασεν ὁ θεὸς (v.9), πάντα and τὰ βῆθη τοῦ θεοῦ (v.10), τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ (v.11), τὰ ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ χαρισθέντα (v.12), τὰ τοῦ πνεύματος τοῦ θεοῦ (v.14), and νοῦν κυρίου (v.16).

hidden character of God's wisdom (2:1, 7), while the second part 2:10-16 expounds in universal language the revealed character of God's wisdom. The universality is only qualified by "through the Spirit" in v.10 and "the mind of the Lord" in v.16. The latter expression summarizes the knowledge that has been revealed according to 2:9-16.

1.3 Judicial language

The verb ἀνακρίνω (2:14, 15 [twice]) is characteristic for this epistle. We encounter it ten times in the letter but elsewhere in the New Testament only five times (in Luke's writings). In classical Greek the verb and the noun ἀνάκρισις usually indicate forensic situations, referring to the examination of persons before trial but also to the examination of the magistrates themselves.⁵ In the Septuagint ἀνακρίνω occurs in Susanna where the figure of Daniel examines the trustworthiness of two judges.⁶ In the New Testament the verb is commonly used for the interrogation of a person or persons by a judge (Lk 23:14; Acts 4:9; 12:19; 24:8; 28:18). Only in Acts 17:11 ἀνακρίνω concerns the examination of the Scriptures. Beyond these references the verb occurs in the New Testament only in this letter, which leads some to attribute the word to the community of Corinth. We may at least conclude that the situation in Corinth occasioned this language. In 1 Cor 4:3 and 9:3 the verb is used for the Corinthian habit of judging the apostle. His reaction in 4:3 is one of refusing to defend himself, while in 9:3 he does enter into a form of self-defence.⁷

1 Cor 6:1-8 shows that the Corinthians were prone to take other church members to court. "The civil courts by convention provided another appropriate arena to conduct a power struggle within the church as it would in any association. The same struggle had moved from the meetings of the Christian community to a session of the civil court."⁸ No doubt, a connection exists between the litigiousness in 1 Cor 6 and the jealousy and strife mentioned in 3:3 in combination with the party spirit of 1:10-12.⁹ The Christian community in Roman Corinth inherited from its background a penchant for legal action. They tend to take a legal approach to tensions, not only in social relationships (1 Cor 6:1-8) but also in the area of teaching. They examine the qualifications of Paul as an apostle, and probably also of others who teach in the community. This explains Paul's emphasis in 2:12-16 that only God's Spirit gives legitimacy to teaching (2:13). Paul refuses any examination that applies the criteria of the κόσμος.

Through the verb ἀνακρίνω the text introduces the question of legitimacy and the right to speak of the things of God. One should see the Corinthian dispute about

⁵ LSJ, s.v. ἀνακρίνω: I. 'examine closely,' 'interrogate,' esp. judicially; II.1 "examine magistrates so as to prove their qualification, 2. "examine "persons concerned in a suit, so as to prepare the matter for trial,"

⁶ LXX Sus 48,52; the verb occurs also in v.13. There is in the Septuagint one more occurrence in 1 Kgdms 20:12. The term is absent in Philo.

⁷ ἡ ἐμὴ ἀπολογία τοῖς ἐμὲ ἀνακρίνουσιν ἐστὶν αὕτη.

⁸ B.W. Winter, "Civil Law and Christian Litigiousness (1 Corinthians 6:1-8)," in *After Paul Left Corinth. The influence of Secular Ethics and Social Change* (Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2001) 66.

⁹ The middle voice ἀνακρίνομαι has the meaning 'dispute,' or 'wrangle with each other' (LSJ, s.v. III, cf. τοὺς ἀνακρινόμενους πρὸς ἑωυτοῦς [Herodotus, *Hist.* 8.56]).

legitimacy against the larger background of a philosophical debate about the criterion of truth. Epistemological discussions made use of forensic terminology.¹⁰ In the same way Paul's theological argument in 1 Cor 2:13–15 employs judicial language. This text presents a conflict regarding the legitimacy of two forms of discourse, one that measures with the standards 'of this age,' and another which receives its authority from the Spirit of God.

1.4 The position of the quotations

1 Cor 2:9

The text creates an atmosphere of expectation by stating what wisdom is not in 2:6 and by using the language of hiddenness and mystery in 2:7. Moreover, the text announces an 'original' wisdom: its origin belongs to an early time, even before all time (πρὸ τῶν αἰώνων). 1 Cor 2:8 intimates only that it has to do with the one time crucifixion of the 'Lord of glory.' After this tension has been built up, its true nature remains undisclosed, because a quotation follows, which makes knowledge of this wisdom appear completely beyond all human grasp. We are led to the threshold of a secret that remains inscrutable for human ears, eyes, and minds. The effect of the quotation is a heightening of the reader's sense of the unattainable. There is a divine wisdom but it eludes the grasp of man.

Verse 9 is introduced as an explicit citation by means of ἀλλὰ καθὼς γέγραπται. The verse may be seen as a continuation of 2:7–8, so that the citation (starting with ἃ) functions as a second object of λαλοῦμεν in 2:7,¹¹ or can be seen as an explication of σοφίαν θεοῦ in 2:7.¹² In the latter case, ἀλλὰ at the beginning of 2:9 stands parallel with ἀλλά at the beginning of 2:7 and both follow the negations in 2:6 (σοφίαν οὐ τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου ...). However, it is more likely that ἀλλὰ in 2:9 refers to its immediate context and responds to οὐδεὶς (τῶν ἀρχόντων) ἔγνωκεν in 2:8; it introduces the opposite group, whose identity is revealed as ἡμῖν after the citation in 2:10. Accordingly, to explicate the sense of 2:9 we have to think after ἀλλὰ in 2:9: (either before or after the citation) ἡμεῖς ἐγνώκαμεν, resulting in the sense: they have not known, but we have come to know. "Instead of declaring *expressis verbis* that 'we know' in contrast to the fact that the rulers do not know, Paul in his liveliness leaves this aside and leaps to the statement in v. 10a."¹³

¹⁰ E.g. κριτήριον (a legal term in 1 Cor 6:2) is used for the criterion of truth. Cf. G. Striker, "Κριτήριον τῆς ἀληθείας," in *Essays on Hellenistic Epistemology and Ethics* (Cambridge: University Press, 1996) 22–76, opening with: "The epistemological debate between the Greek philosophical schools of the third and second centuries B.C. – the Skeptics on the one hand and the Stoics and the Epicureans on the other – can be described without undue simplification as a dispute over the question of the criterion of truth. Strictly speaking, there were two questions: first, whether a criterion of truth exists, and second, what it might be" (22).

¹¹ Merklein 232.

¹² Weiss 57: "sondern (eine Weisheit, die so beschaffen ist), wie geschrieben steht."

¹³ B. Frid, "The enigmatic ΑΛΛΑ in 1 Corinthians 2.9," *NTS* 31 (1985) 607–8.

This clarification on the complementary character of ἀλλά is useful for discerning the structure, but the text as it stands still leaves the reader of 2:9 in suspense whether there is anyone who knows the wisdom of God. The continuation with ἡμῖν δὲ ἀπεκάλυπεν ὁ θεὸς διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος is abrupt but as such also forceful. Paul resolutely draws the knowledge of the wisdom of God within the orbit of those who have received the Spirit of God, that is not only the apostolic circle but the company of believers as a whole, the κλητοὶ ἅγιοι of 1:1. In 2:9–10 the old and the new meet. Traditional expressions about ears that do not hear, eyes that do not see, and hearts that do not conceive, are followed by a radical statement on the reality of present revelation. God’s wisdom comes a long way in the language of Israel’s Scriptures (2:9) and is revealed in the present by the Spirit (2:10). Finally, the genre of the quotation differs from the context. The poetic language of the quotation is embedded in the argumentative style of the context.

1 Cor 2:16

The second quotation in 2:16 can also be regarded as explicit because of the conjunction γάρ and the repetition of seven words from Isa 40:13. Its form is that of a question and this question, “who has known the mind of the Lord?” expects a negative answer: “nobody.” But the preceding text in 2:10–15 influences the reader to listen with a new awareness to this traditional question. In line with the tendency of 2:10–15 the question is followed in v.16b by a positive affirmation, couched in the language of the quotation: “we, now, have the mind of Christ.”

The second clause of the citation, “that he should instruct him,” seems superfluous. Its position between the clause with the interrogative pronoun τίς, and the clause with the apparent response (ἡμεῖς) seems misplaced at first sight. Moreover, the meaning of “that he should instruct him,” goes beyond the meaning of the first clause, “who has known the mind of the Lord?” To give instruction to God is even more presumptuous than having a share in God’s understanding. The inclusion of this second clause, however, shows that “we have the mind of the Lord,” is not a straightforward affirmation of what the citation aims to deny. 1 Cor 2:16b does not simply give a positive answer to the question laid down by the citation.

The scope of 16b does not match the scope of 16a. Significant are the differences in formulation: ‘knowing the mind of the Lord’ and ‘having the mind of Christ.’¹⁴ What is the meaning of “we have the mind of Christ” in 1 Cor 2:16? We mention four options:

1. Ability. Νοῦς Χριστοῦ is a capacity or faculty of thinking as in 1 Cor 14:14, 15, 19, and Phil 4:17.¹⁵ The expression may also refer to the ability to discern or judge (cf. 1 Cor 2:14–15), e.g. in EpArist 276: τὸ δὲ νοῦν ἔχειν ὁξὺν καὶ δύνασθαι

¹⁴ Cf. Voss, *Wort*, 188, who argues that νοῦς in 2:16a has a different meaning from νοῦς in 2:16b: “Gottes Sinn zu kennen, bedeutet Einblick in das zu haben, was Gott in seinem Handeln antreibt; den Sinn Christi zu haben, bedeutet, ein pneumatisches und daher dem *Gekreuzigten* entsprechendes Erkenntnisvermögen zu haben.”

¹⁵ BDAG s.v.1b. Cf. Voss, *Wort*, 188: “den Sinn Christi haben, bedeutet, ein pneumatisches und daher dem *Gekreuzigten* entsprechendes Erkenntnisvermögen zu haben.”

- κρίνειν ἕκαστα θεοῦ δῶρημα καλὸν ἔστιν (“the possession of an acute mind and the ability to discern everything, that is an excellent gift from God,” OTP 2).
2. Knowledge. The expression refers to the result of thinking, as expressed in ‘la pensée du Christ’ (Bible de Jérusalem), ‘den Gedanken Christi,’¹⁶ “the thoughts of Christ as they are revealed by the Spirit.”¹⁷
 3. Ability and knowledge. Νοῦς Χριστοῦ means the “mind, attitude, way of thinking as the sum total of the whole mental and moral state of being”¹⁸ determined by Christ. This understanding of νοῦς Χριστοῦ does not exclude content and is adequately expressed by the word ‘mind,’ because ‘mind’ denotes both the faculty of thought (intellect) and the thoughts or inclinations.¹⁹ The German ‘Sinn’ corresponds more or less with this understanding of ‘mind.’ In the same way Strüder, in his monograph devoted to the subject, translates νοῦς Χριστοῦ with “die Gesinnung Christi” and defines it as the ability to assess (*Beurteilungsfähigkeit*) in combination with a definite content. He adds that the expression is oriented towards Christ as the crucified one and towards making ethical decisions in daily life.²⁰ A comparable interpretation is Schrage’s “die pneumatische Urteilsfähigkeit, mit der die Weisheit denkerisch erfasst und handelnd umgesetzt wird.”²¹
 4. With νοῦς Χριστοῦ is meant πνεῦμα Χριστοῦ.²² Many exegetes argue that πνεῦμα expresses Paul’s purpose, and that he only employs νοῦς, because he did not know the Hebrew text of Isa 40:13.²³ There is no doubt a close relationship between νοῦς Χριστοῦ and πνεῦμα τοῦ θεοῦ in 1 Cor 2:16. The means by which “we have the mind of Christ” is the Spirit of God.²⁴ But this does not mean that the two are interchangeable. It is more likely that Paul knew of the Hebrew רוּחַ (which agreed with his context), but that he wanted to say more with the help of νοῦς. Νοῦς is a fitting conclusion to the cognitive emphasis in 2:6–16 because the term relates closer to thought than πνεῦμα does. He exploits the fact that the LXX

¹⁶ Lindemann 58; Schnabel 180.

¹⁷ Fee 119; BDAG s.v.3 places νοῦς κυρίου and νοῦς Χριστοῦ in 1 Cor 2:16 under this heading.

¹⁸ BDAG s.v.2, referring to Rom 1:28, 12:2; Eph 4:17, 23; Col 2:18.

¹⁹ Cf. *Collins Dictionary of the English Language* (Glasgow: Collins, 1979) s.v. Many English translations and commentaries have ‘mind of Christ.’

²⁰ Strüder, *Gesinnung*, 254–6. Basic to νοῦς is the “menschliche Befähigung zur Urteilsbildung und Entscheidungsfindung.” While this description refers to capacity, Strüder also points at content: “Da menschliche Urteile aber an bestimmte inhaltliche Kriterien gebunden sind, werden auch mit dem νοῦς immer wieder konkrete Inhalte verknüpft” (230).

²¹ Schrage 267; Merklein 244 (‘Verstand Christi’) does not mention action, when he explains it as “die Fähigkeit, den gekreuzigten Christus als Weisheit Gottes anzuerkennen.”

²² Conzelmann 94; Schrage 267, Kammler, *Kreuz*, 233–34; Schnabel 180.

²³ First defended by Kautsch, cf. O. Michel, *Paulus und seine Bibel* (Gütersloh, Bertelsmann, 1929) 68.

²⁴ Robertson-Plummer 51.

does not have πνεῦμα but νοῦς to assert something that goes beyond the statement “we have the Spirit of Christ.”²⁵

The third option provides the best understanding of νοῦς Χριστοῦ on the level of the New Testament text. A consideration of the intertextual relationships evoked by the quotation “who has known the mind of the Lord?” may qualify or amplify this understanding.

2. Scripture

2.1 Substructures

Intertextual relationships often take the form of correspondences between phrases and sentences but may also concern the reproduction of structures. Does 1 Cor 1–2 in some way reproduce structural features of the pre-texts under discussion? Under the heading ‘substructures’ three possible structural relationships between 1 Cor 2 and Scripture will be explored.

1 Cor 2:6–7 and Isa 31:1–3

Because σοφός seems to have functioned as a catchword in the selection of quotations from LXX Isaiah, Isa 31:2 merits attention. This is one of the few places in the Prophets where it is said that God is wise. In this verse we, moreover, read “*he also* is wise” (καὶ αὐτὸς σοφός). This phrasing suggests that the text alludes to others who consider themselves wise. And indeed, a reference to the wisdom of wise men can be noted earlier in the pre-text Isa 28–33, in Isa 29:14 (ἡ σοφία τῶν σοφῶν). Accordingly, the pre-text moves from human wisdom in Isa 29:14 to divine wisdom in Isa 31:2. This appears to be an underlying pattern that is reproduced in 1 Cor 1–2. In 1 Cor 1:17–2:5 human wisdom (in contrast with the word of the cross) has been the focus of attention. In 1 Cor 2:6 a shift takes place and the text now speaks of the wisdom of God (2:7). In this passage God’s wisdom is introduced by contrasting it with the wisdom of this age (2:6).

The basic contrast in 1 Cor 1–4, however, is not that between this age and God, or the world and God, but between man and God. The essence of the wisdom of the world is that it is the wisdom of man. It is marked by the limitations of man, man as creature, fundamentally unequal over against God. The opposition between man and God is an important structural element in 1 Cor 1–4. In a number of verses the opposition occurs literally in the language used: e.g. in 1:25, 29 (‘flesh’ for ‘man’), 2: 5, 13 (‘Spirit’ for ‘God’), and in 4:1. In other passages the opposition is articulated not in the same verse, but in the following text (cf. 3:18 with 23, and 4:3 with 5). The same contrast comes to the fore in the alternatives of boasting in men (3:21, cf. 1:29) and boasting in the Lord (1:31). It so happens that Isa 31:3 expresses this contrast in the words Αἰγύπτιον ἄνθρωπον καὶ οὐ θεόν, words that warn the hearers not to depend on the human force and wisdom of

²⁵ Cf. T. McLay. *The Use of the Septuagint in New Testament Research* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003) 150–151. See further the discussion in section 2.3.

Egypt, but on the God of Israel. As a result, the passage LXX Isa 31:1–3 is reflected in 1 Cor 1–4, not only in providing an instance of the wisdom of God, but also in explicitly contrasting God and man as two different sources of support.

1 Cor 2:8–10 and Isa 52:13–53:1

1 Cor 2:8 explains that none of the rulers of this age knew the wisdom of God. If they had, they would not have crucified the ‘Lord of glory.’ The latter term draws our attention to the word δόξα in LXX Isaiah. The term features regularly in the book, but in Isa 52:13–53:1 the word receives special treatment, because here it is ascribed to a person, just like this is done in 1 Cor 2:8. Moreover, the ascription of δόξα in both these texts is ambiguous.

Isaiah’s servant songs are characterized by cryptic and veiled language and the same is true to a certain extent for 1 Cor 2:6–10. It is not very profitable to seek to establish the identity of the servant in MT and LXX Isa 52:13–53:12. Westermann rightly observes “The questions which should control exegesis are: “What do the texts make known about what transpires, or is to transpire, between God, the servant, and those to whom his task pertains?”²⁶ In this respect correspondences between the two texts come to light. The text of 1 Cor 2:8–10 contains four actors or acting parties: ‘the rulers of this age’ (1 Cor 2:8), ‘the Lord of glory’ (2:8), ‘God’ (2:10), and ‘we’ (2:10). The text of Isa 52:13–53:1 speaks correspondingly of four agents or groups: ‘many nations’/ ‘kings’ (53:15), ‘my servant (Isa 52:13),’ God (‘the Lord,’ 53:1), and ‘we’ (53:1, cf. 53:2–6).

LXX Isa 52:13–53:1

52:13 Ἴδού συνήσει ὁ παῖς μου
καὶ ὑψωθήσεται καὶ δοξασθήσεται
σφόδρα. 14 ὃν τρόπον ἐκστήσονται ἐπὶ
σὲ πολλοί – οὕτως ἀδοξήσει ἀπὸ
ἀνθρώπων τὸ εἶδος σου καὶ ἡ δόξα σου
ἀπὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων – ,
15 οὕτως θαυμάσονται ἔθνη πολλὰ ἐπ’
αὐτῷ, καὶ συνέξουσιν βασιλεῖς τὸ στόμα
αὐτῶν·
ὅτι οἷς οὐκ ἀνηγγέλη περὶ αὐτοῦ,
ὄψονται, καὶ οἷς οὐκ ἀκηκόασιν,
συνήσουσιν. –
53:1 κύριε, τίς ἐπίστευσεν τῇ ἀκοῇ ἡμῶν;
καὶ ὁ βραχίων κυρίου τίς ἀπεκαλύφθη;

52:13 See, my servant shall understand,
and he shall be exalted and glorified
exceedingly

MT Isa 52:13–53:1

52:13 הִנֵּה יִשְׁכִּיל עַבְדִּי
יְרוּם וְנִשָּׂא וְגָבַהּ מְאֹד:
14 כְּאֲשֶׁר שָׁמְמוּ עָלָיו רַבִּים
כֵּן-מִשְׁחַת מְאִישׁ מְרֹאֲהוּ
וְתָאֲרוּ מִבְּנֵי אָדָם:
15 כֵּן יִזָּה גּוֹיִם רַבִּים עָלָיו
יִקְפְּצוּ מְלָכִים פִּיָּהֶם
כִּי אֲשֶׁר לֹא-סָפַר לָהֶם רָאוּ
וְאֲשֶׁר לֹא-שָׁמְעוּ הִתְבּוֹנְנוּ:
53:1 מִי הָאֱמִין לְשִׁמְעָתָנוּ
וְזָרוּעַ יְהוָה עַל-מִי נִגְלָתָהּ:

52:13 See, my servant shall prosper;
he shall be exalted and lifted up,
and shall be very high.

²⁶ Westermann, *Isaiah 40–66*, 93.

<p>14 Just as many shall be astonished at you – so shall your appearance be without glory from men, and your glory be absent from men – 15 so shall many nations be astonished at him, and kings shall shut their mouth, because those who were not informed about him shall see and those who did not hear shall understand.</p> <p>53:1 Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?</p>	<p>14 Just as there were many who were astonished at you (MT; NRSV: him) – so marred was his appearance, beyond human semblance, and his form beyond that of mortals – 15 so he shall startle many nations; kings shall shut their mouths because of him; for that which had not been told them they shall see, and that which they had not heard they shall contemplate. 53:1 Who has believed what we have heard? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?</p>
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The position of the servant in relation to God and men merits closer inspection. This position is described in terms of ‘glory.’ ‘Glory’ plays a prominent role in Isa 52:13–14 in the form of the noun δόξα and the verbs δοξάζω and ἄδοξέω. The connection between LXX Isa 52:13–15 and 1 Cor 2:8 does not just consist in the shared use of δόξα but in its specific use: glory is attributed to a person and this happens in a very ambiguous way. In 1 Cor 2:8 the one who was crucified and thereby divested of all glory, is paradoxically identified as ‘the Lord of glory.’ Likewise in Isaiah, within the scope of two verses, glory is attributed to the servant (v.13) and also denied to him (v.14). In LXX Isa 52:14 the appearance of the servant is portrayed as having lost all glory, even the glory that belongs to being human.²⁷ The phrases ἀπὸ ἀνθρώπων τὸ εἶδος σου and καὶ ἡ δόξα σου ἀπὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων both depend on the verb ἄδοξέω, a hapax, meaning ‘to be without glory’ (NETS).²⁸ Isaiah speaks of the glorification of the servant who lost or will lose all glory, 1 Corinthians speaks of the Lord of glory without glory.

²⁷ Remember that LXX Isa 40:6 (unlike MT) speaks of the ‘glory of man.’ See Chapter 9.2.1 ‘All Flesh.’

²⁸ On ἄδοξέω depends the meaning of the preposition ἀπό. Elsewhere in such a construction ἀπό can be understood in the same sense as ὑπό, indicating the agent (cf. Lk 9:22; Acts 2:22; BDF §210.2). Then we should translate “so shall your appearance be despised *by* men and your glory (be despised) *by* men.” This is also how LXX-D translates: “so wird dein Aussehen von den Menschen entehrt werden und die Ehre die dir zukommt, vonseiten der Menschen.” However, this translation neglects the specific connotation of ἀπό that arises when we take in this case the Hebrew into account. Placed before ‘man’ (מָאִישׁ, LXX ἀπὸ ἀνθρώπων) the preposition מִן expresses denial, as is also the case in MT Isa 7:8, where יִחַת אֶפְרַיִם מֵעַם means that Ephraim will cease to be a people (cf. Duhm, *Jesaja*, 73: מֵעַם signifies מְהִירוֹת עַם). Therefore כֵּן-מִשְׁחַת מֵאִישׁ מְרֻאָהוּ means “disfigured beyond man (is) his appearance.” We conclude that in MT Isa 52:14 מִן serves to express separation in a figurative sense and that the LXX chose ἀπό because this preposition expresses separation in the local sense. Even though idiomatic Greek ἀπό fails to

The two texts may share another structural element.²⁹ Isa 52:13–15 moves in the same semantic field as 1 Cor 2:6–16 does. Both texts exhibit an intriguing dialectic between absence and presence of understanding. Isa 52:13 announces that the servant will understand (ἰδοὺ συνήσει ὁ παῖς μου), and it is said that others will understand in verse 15b (συνήσουσιν), even people who have not heard. Their understanding however concerns the servant (περὶ αὐτοῦ in the preceding line). Furthermore, not only glory but also hearing is a paradoxical affair in Isa 52:15–53:1. There is not a direct relationship between hearing and understanding, because “those who have not heard, will understand (51:15),” and those who have heard do not understand (“Lord, who has believed our report [ἀκοή]?” 53:1).

The Septuagint of Isaiah has the term ἀκοή only in 6:9, 52:7, and 53:1. After LXX Isa 6:9 laid down that the prophet’s message will not be understood,³⁰ Isa 52:7 announces the new appearance of a message of peace (ἀκοή εἰρήνης) concerning salvation and the reign of God and Isa 53:1 a report (ἀκοή ἡμῶν) concerning the servant. The reports in LXX Isa 52:7 and 53:1 are related to each other.³¹ In 1 Corinthians, Isa 52:7 with its positive sense remains outside the scope of 1 Cor 1–4,³² but LXX Isa 53:1 plays a role in the background in 1 Cor 2:8–10. With κύριε, τίς ἐπίστευσεν τῇ ἀκοῇ ἡμῶν, Isa 53:1 conveys the experience of having one’s message rejected.³³ This experience resounds in 1 Cor 2:8–9, in “none of the rulers has known” and “no ear has heard.” Then, however, we hear, “but to us God has revealed” (ἡμῖν δὲ ἀπεκάλυψεν ὁ θεός, 2:10). This sounds like an

communicate the figurative idea of separation or having been set apart, this understanding may come to mind in the case of LXX Isa 52:14 because it is supported by the context and possible familiarity with the Hebrew.

²⁹ There is to some extent a parallel in LXX Isa 52:15 and 1 Cor 2:9 concerning seeing and hearing of what has not been seen or heard but, as the discussion of 1 Cor 2:9a will show, there are more grounds to link these words specifically with Isaiah 64:3.

³⁰ The prophet hears that he must say ‘to this people,’ Ἀκοῇ ἀκούσετε καὶ οὐ μὴ συνήτε.

³¹ Cf. J.C. Bastiaens, *Interpretaties van Jesaja 53. Een intertextueel onderzoek naar de lijdende Knecht in Jes 53 (MT/LXX) en in Lk 22:14–38, Hand 3:12–26, Hand 4:23–31 en Hand 8:26–40* (Tilburg: University Press, 1993) 130. In Romans 10:15–16 Paul closely associates these verses by quoting from them and portraying himself as one of Isaiah’s messengers of good news (εὐαγγελιζόμενοι, Isa 52:7) and as one who brings Isaiah’s report (53:1). This correspondence is fundamental in the relationship of Isaiah with the letter to the Romans. “It is of tremendous significance for understanding Paul’s appropriation of the Book of Isaiah to recognize that this quotation assumes a fundamental correspondence between Paul’s apostolic proclamation and Isaiah’s message. It is not simply that Isaiah long ago predicted something that is now fulfilled in Paul’s ministry. Rather, Isaiah remains a living voice for Paul, one who speaks alongside the apostle as an authoritative witness to the gospel” (Wagner, *Heralds*, 179–80).

³² Yet, the Pauline εὐαγγελίζεσθαι in 1 Cor 1:17 may still be faintly related to LXX Isaiah (40:9, 52:7, 60:6, 61:1).

³³ Paul’s letter to the Romans quotes both LXX Isa 52:15 and 53:1. After the negative experience of Isa 53:1 expressed in Rom 10:16 (“for Isaiah says, ‘Lord, who has believed our report?’”) the argument in Romans ends in 15:21 with a positive view, the inclusion of the Gentiles, with the quotation from Isa 52:15, “Those who have never been told of him shall see, and those who have never heard of him shall understand.”

answer to Isaiah's question, "to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed (τίνι ἀπεκαλύφθη);"³⁴ A parallel question-answer pattern appears in 1 Cor 2:16 (Isa 40:13, "who has known the mind of the Lord?" with the apostolic response, "but we have the mind of Christ").

It is surprising, as Wagner remarks, that nowhere in his letters Paul explicitly quotes from the rest of Isaiah 53 beyond verse 1 and that nowhere he equates Jesus Christ with Isaiah's servant. This thought only "lingers behind the text as a virtually unavoidable implication."³⁵ Hays interprets the seeming absence of Isaiah 53 thus: "Paul's transumptive silence cries out for the reader to complete the trope."³⁶ When one senses the presence of Isaiah's servant behind Paul's word of the cross, the intertextual relationship is one of profound tension, because an explicit link is withheld. Meanwhile, Isa 53:1 speaks of the revelation of 'the arm' of the Lord, which suggests a manifestation of power, while the cross is the ultimate sign of weakness. And yet, the thought of power surfaces in 1 Cor 1:18: the word of the cross is "the power of God" for those who believe. There is power where the world sees only weakness, as there was glory where the rulers of this age imposed shame.

1 Cor 2:6-16 and the book of Daniel

1 Cor 2:1 and 7 speak of 'mystery' (μυστήριον) and 2:10 of revelation (ἀποκαλύπτω). This combination in 1 Cor 2, even though not in one sentence, encourages us to think of the book of Daniel, where these two words are common fare, e.g. LXX Dan 2:27, ἀνακαλύπτων (Theod ἀποκαλύπτων) μυστήρια, see below. In this text the mystery is hidden for wise men and others who possess knowledge (cf. 1 Cor 1:20); it can only be revealed by God in heaven.

LXX Dan 2:27-28

Τὸ μυστήριον, ὃ ἐώρακεν ὁ βασιλεὺς,
οὐκ ἔστι σοφῶν καὶ φαρμακῶν καὶ
ἐπαιδῶν καὶ γαζαρηνῶν ἢ δῆλωσις,
28 ἀλλ' ἔστι θεὸς ἐν οὐρανῷ
ἀνακαλύπτων μυστήρια,
ὃς ἐδήλωσε τῷ βασιλεῖ

Theod Dan 2:27-28

Τὸ μυστήριον, ὃ ὁ βασιλεὺς ἐπερωτᾷ,
οὐκ ἔστιν σοφῶν, μάγων, ἐπαιδῶν,
γαζαρηνῶν ἀναγγεῖλαι τῷ βασιλεῖ,
28 ἀλλ' ἡ ἔστιν θεὸς ἐν οὐρανῷ
ἀποκαλύπτων μυστήρια
καὶ ἐγνώρισεν τῷ βασιλεῖ

³⁴ O. Betz points out that the Targum has בְּסוֹרֵתָא 'our glad tidings' in Isa 53:1a for 'our report' (MT שְׂמֵעָתָנוּ, LXX ἀκοή ἡμῶν). This employment of the equivalent of εὐαγγέλιον shows that Isa 53:1 was read in the light of 52:7. (O. Betz, "Der gekreuzigte Christus, unsere Weisheit und Gerechtigkeit (der alttestamentliche Hintergrund von 1 Korinther 1-2)," in *Tradition and Interpretation in the New Testament* (ed. G.F. Hawthorne and O. Betz; Tübingen: Mohr, 1987) 197.

³⁵ Wagner, *Heralds*, 335.

³⁶ Hays, *Echoes*, 63 refers to its rhetorical effect. The passage was well known in early Christian preaching and was very likely part of Paul's earlier instruction in Corinth (cf. 1 Cor 1:6, "the witness to Christ has (already) been confirmed among you"). Luke explicitly employs Isa 53 in his writings (cf. Bastiaens, *Interpretaties*).

Ναβουχοδοноσορ
ἃ δεῖ γενέσθαι ἐπ' ἐσχάτων τῶν ἡμερῶν.

That which the king has seen:
the explanation is not of the sages and
enchanters and sorcerers and Gazarenes
28 but there is a God (NETS: 'Lord') in
heaven
illuminating mysteries who has disclosed
to King Nabouchodonosor what must
happen at the end of days.

Ναβουχοδοноσορ ἃ δεῖ γενέσθαι ἐπ'
ἐσχάτων τῶν ἡμερῶν.

The mystery that the king asks:
it is not of sages, magicians, enchanters,
Gazarenes to tell to the king,
28 but rather, there is a God in heaven
revealing mysteries and he has made
known
to King Nabouchodonosor what must
happen at the end of days.

The text exhibits the οὐκ-ἀλλά pattern that is also a structural component of 1 Cor 2 (see this Chapter 1.1). An opposition is displayed between the advisors of the king and the God in heaven. In Isa 19:11-12 a comparable contrast occurs but while Isaiah thinks in terms of counsel and wisdom, Daniel speaks of 'mystery.' In Isa 19:12 the wise men of Egypt's king are challenged to declare "what the Lord Sabaoth has planned against Egypt." This refers to the future, in Daniel the mystery refers to "what must happen at the end of days." In Isaiah God's wisdom remains on the historical level (cf. Isa 28:23-29 and 31:2) but in Daniel the mysteries have an outright eschatological character.

Like Daniel, Paul uses the term μυστήριον for eschatological events, such as the resurrection (1 Cor 15:51) and the salvation of Israel (Rom 11:25). Therefore, when the apostle also uses μυστήριον for the message of salvation through the cross in 1 Cor 2:1 and 7, there needs to be little doubt that in his eyes the cross of Christ is an eschatological event. In 1 Cor 1-4 the cross has brought near the kingdom of God (1 Cor 4:20), it has broken the power of the rulers of this age (1 Cor 2:6, 8; 1:27-28), and exhibited the wisdom of the world as foolishness (1:20).

There are more points of resemblance between 1 Cor 2 and Dan. Even though they are less precise than those in the preceding paragraph, they illustrate the similar climate of 1 Cor 2 and Daniel. We read τὰ βόθη τοῦ θεοῦ in 1 Cor 2:10 and βαθέα in LXX and Theod Dan 2:22. Here the language of Theodotion with αὐτὸς ἀποκαλύπτει βαθέα καὶ ἀπόκρυφα (cf. 1 Cor 2:7 ἀποκεκρυμμένη) comes closest to 1 Cor 2. Moreover, the thought that Daniel is able to know mysteries because of the presence of a divine spirit in him (e.g. Theod 5:11, 14 πνεῦμα θεοῦ, LXX Dan 5:12 πνεῦμα ἅγιον) shows affinity with 1 Cor 2:10 where it says that God has revealed 'to us' διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος.

Of more importance is the verb συγκρίνω in 1 Cor 2:13 and in Daniel. Its meaning in 1 Cor 2:13 and the meaning of the whole phrase πνευματικοῖς πνευματικὰ συγκρίνοντες has been hotly debated. The verb συγκρίνω here can be understood in two ways, either in the sense 'compare' or in the sense 'interpret.' The first sense points to the field of rhetoric, the second to the interpretation of dreams.³⁷ In the latter manner the

³⁷ For the latter understanding, see Merklein 241, Collins 135, Schnabel 175, Fitzmyer 182, Kammler, *Kreuz*, 224-6.

verb and the cognate nouns σύγκρισις and σύγκριμα are used in the Septuagint, particularly in the book of Daniel (LXX and Theod), but also in LXX Genesis. The first occurrence in Scripture is Gen 40:8, where the chief cupbearer and the chief baker say to Joseph concerning their dreams, ὁ συγκρίνων αὐτὸ οὐκ ἔστιν. The first occurrence in Daniel is Dan 2:4, where Chaldeans ask the king to tell them his dream so that they can give him the interpretation (σύγκρισις). Gen 40–41 and Daniel know of a twofold process that consists of first revealing the dream and then interpreting its meaning (e.g. Dan 2:45; 4:4, 16).

This twofold process functions not only in relation to dreams but also regarding the interpretation of Scripture in Daniel (cf. 9:2, 20–24), in Qumran and other ancient literature.³⁸ In Daniel and Qumran the text of Scripture has already been given, but its interpretation requires a seer and a new occasion of revelation. 1 Cor 2:13b also affirms the need for interpretation when it uses the verb συγκρίνω in πνευματικὰ συγκρίνοντες. This elaborates the idea of 2:13a that the Spirit is needed for the understanding of ‘spiritual things.’ It is noteworthy that 1 Cor 2 presents not the seer or the Teacher, or in this case the apostle, but the Spirit as the teacher of the community.

1 Cor 2:7 λαλοῦμεν θεοῦ σοφίαν
ἐν μυστηρίῳ,
.....
8 ἦν οὐδεὶς τῶν ἀρχόντων τοῦ αἰῶνος
τούτου ἔγνωκεν

1 Cor 2:13 ἃ καὶ λαλοῦμεν
..... ἐν διδακτοῖς πνεύματος,
.....
14 ψυχικὸς δὲ ἄνθρωπος οὐ δέχεται τὰ
τοῦ πνεύματος τοῦ θεοῦ

1 Cor 2:6–8 speaks of the wisdom of God without reference to the Spirit. After the introduction of the Spirit as means of revelation in 2:10–11, 2:13–14 covers the same ideas as expressed in 2:6–8 but now in terms of the Spirit. While 2:6 describes the audience of λαλοῦμεν with the dative of τελεῖοι, 2:13 does so with the dative of πνευματικοί. The noun πνευματικοίς is most naturally taken as masculine, as in the Septuagint the dative case with συγκρίνω usually refers to the recipients of the interpretation (cf. Gen 40:22, 41:12, 13; Dan 5:7). This gives as sense “explaining spiritual things to spiritual people” or, in words that are closer to the intention of 1 Cor 2:6–16, “explaining things of the Spirit to people of the Spirit.”

Should we observe, therefore, a twofold process of revelation and interpretation as in the case of Daniel and Qumran with respect to dreams and Scripture? Or does 2:13–14 refer to the same single process as 2:6–7 does, but only in different words? The truth probably lies in the middle. 1 Cor 2:13–14 is not the same as 2:6–7, but not altogether different either. The wisdom of God appears in 2:6–7 in general terms but in 13–14 in an

³⁸ A. Lange, “Interpretation als Offenbarung. Zum Verhältnis von Schriftauslegung und Offenbarung in apokalyptischer und nichtapokalyptischer Literatur,” in *Wisdom and Apocalypticism in the Dead Sea Scrolls and in the biblical Tradition* (ed. F. García Martínez; Leuven: Peeters, 2003) 17–33. In the pesher-method of interpretation in Qumran the text of Scripture receives a revelatory explanation, often introduced by a formula with פֶּשֶׁר. Even though Paul hardly uses this ‘method,’ still the way he actualizes Scripture in the context of the eschatological present, shows some analogies (Koch, *Zeuge*, 228–9).

applied and practical sense. There is a shift of focus from revelation in 1 Cor 2:6-12 to teaching and understanding in 2:13-16. This is evident not only semantically (cf. the verbs of teaching and explaining in 2:13) but also syntactically. The predominant aorist tense in 2:6-12 changes into the present tense in 2:13-16.³⁹ In verse 13 the emphasis is on present teaching, on the continued process of understanding of what has previously been revealed.

I conclude that the pattern of revelation-interpretation in Daniel lingers in the background of 1 Cor 2:6-16. In Daniel the words *μυστήριον* and *ἀποκαλύπτω* belong to the first phase, *συγκρίνω* belongs to the second. The same order exists in 1 Cor 2:6-16. For revelation the Spirit was necessary (2:10-12), but this is no less the case for understanding. Finally, in addition to the *συγκρίνω* of teaching, *ἀνακρίνω* (vv.14-15) is used for recognizing the value of what is taught. The verb *συγκρίνω* refers to the good judgment of the teacher, the verb *ἀνακρίνω* to the good judgment of the ones taught.

2.2 The Quotation in 1 Cor 2:9

1 Cor 2:9 is introduced as a quotation, but locating its source has been notoriously difficult. There is no text of Scripture in any known version that contains these precise words. For this reason other options have been considered. Some believe that Paul quotes from a document that is unknown to us.⁴⁰ Parallels have been assembled especially from apocalyptic⁴¹ and Gnostic⁴² circles, because this text is congenial to both quarters. The late origin of the parallels, however, strongly suggests that they were influenced by 1 Cor 2:9, or that they are independent. The closest parallel is a reference in Pseudo-Philo (L.A.B. 26:13) to the twelve precious stones representing the tribes of Israel. After having been stored they will be given back by God from a place “where eye has not seen nor has ear heard and it has not entered into the heart of man.” This text shows that a conflation of Isa 64:4 (LXX) and 65:17 was current, probably even in the time of Paul.⁴³ Still, a Pauline derivation from L.A.B. is unlikely. The fact that 1 Clement 34:8 quotes 1 Cor 2:9 but replaces *τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτόν* with *τοῖς ὑπομένουσιν αὐτόν* shows that this author sees Isa 64:4 (LXX) as its source.⁴⁴ Part of the uncertainty results from the fact that the ideas of this quotation occur in various ways in the book of Isaiah and wisdom writings.

Thiselton concludes: “Only two less speculative possibilities remain. Either Paul begins ‘It is written’ with a phrase or two from Isa 64:4 and 65:17 in mind and then

³⁹ Cf. *συγκρίνοντες* in v.13, *δέχεται*, *δύναται γινῶναι*, and *ἀνακρίνεται* in v.14, *ἀνακρίνει* and *ἀνακρίνεται* in v.15, and *ἔχομεν* in v.16.

⁴⁰ Weiss 59; Schrage 255; A. Feuillet, “L’énigme de 1 Cor 2:9,” in *Le Christ Sagesse de Dieu* (Paris: Gabalda, 1966) 47 considers the liturgy of the synagogue Paul’s most probable source.

⁴¹ Lindemann 66-7; Cf. K. Berger, “Zur Diskussion über die Herkunft von 1 Kor 2.9,” NTS 24 (1977/78) 270-83.

⁴² Cf. *Gosp. Thom.* 17: “Jesus said: ‘I will give you what eye has not seen and what ear has not heard and what hand has not touched and (what) has not arisen in the heart.’”

⁴³ D.J. Harrington (OTP 2, 299) decides concerning L.A.B. for a date prior to 70 A.D.

⁴⁴ Cf. A.T. Hanson, “A Quasi-Gnostic Pauline Midrash: 1 Corinthians 2:6-16,” in *The New Testament Interpretation of Scripture* (London: SPCK, 1980) 46-7.

departs from his text, or he offers only allusive resonances which we cannot identify.”⁴⁵ There is sufficient reason to prefer the first solution. Jerome solved the question by calling the quotation a ‘paraphrase’ because in his view Paul is more concerned here with meaning than with particular words.⁴⁶ One may also consider the quotation to be a traditional amalgamation.⁴⁷ But this amalgamation may also be attributed to Paul himself, considering the freedom with which he sometimes quotes. While in chain quotations the composing texts can be isolated, this is more difficult in the case of an amalgamation, because in it several texts merge “without any indication that they come from different portions of Scripture.”⁴⁸ We will explore the possibility that 1 Cor 2:9 is a combination of Isa 64:4 (LXX) and 65:16-17, influenced by 52:15.

1 Cor 2:9a and Isa 64:4 (LXX)

The context of Isa 64:4 (LXX) is a long prayer of the penitent people (LXX Isa 63:7-64:12, MT 63:7-64:11). The prayer resembles the psalms of the exile but has also much in common with the prophetic language of Isa 56-66.⁴⁹ We will pay special attention to the immediate context 64:1-5a of the quoted words from Isa 64:4 (LXX).

LXX Isa 64:1-5a

64:1 ἐὰν ἀνοίξης τὸν οὐρανόν,
τρόμος λήμψεται ἀπὸ σοῦ ὄρη,
καὶ τακήσονται,
2 ὥς κηρὸς ἀπὸ πυρὸς τήκεται.
καὶ κατακάψει πῦρ τοὺς ὑπεναντίους,
καὶ φανερόν ἔσται τὸ ὄνομα κυρίου ἐν
τοῖς ὑπεναντίοις·
ἀπὸ προσώπου σου ἔθνη
ταραχθήσονται.
3 ὅταν ποιῇς τὰ ἐνδοξα,
τρόμος λήμψεται ἀπὸ σοῦ ὄρη.
4 ἀπὸ τοῦ αἰῶνος οὐκ ἠκούσαμεν
οὐδὲ οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ ἡμῶν εἶδον
θεὸν πλὴν σοῦ καὶ τὰ ἔργα σου,
ἃ ποιήσεις τοῖς ὑπομένουσιν ἔλεον.

MT Isa 63:19-64:4a

63:19 לֹא-קָרַעְתָּ שָׁמַיִם
יִרְדְּתָּ מִפְּנֵי הָרִים
נָזְלוּ:
64:1 כִּקְדַח אֵשׁ הַמָּסִים
מִים תִּבְעֶה-אֵשׁ
לְהוֹדִיעַ שְׁמֶךָ לְצָרֶיךָ
מִפְּנֵי גוֹיִם יִרְגָּזוּ:
2 בַּעֲשׂוֹתֶךָ נִוְרָאוֹת לֹא נִקְוָה
יִרְדְּתָּ מִפְּנֵי הָרִים נָזְלוּ:
3 וַיַּעֲזֹלֵם לֹא-שָׁמְעוּ לֹא הֶאֱזִינוּ
עֵין לֹא-רָאָתָה
אֱלֹהִים זִוְלָתָךְ
יַעֲשֶׂה לְמַחֲכֶה-לוֹ:
4 פָּנַעְתָּ אֶת-שֵׁשׁ וַעֲשֶׂה צֶדֶק

⁴⁵ Thiselton 251.

⁴⁶ Thus Jerome (Vall. IV, 70): “paraphrasim huius testimonii quasi Hebraeus ex Hebraeis assumit ap. P. de authenticis libris ... non verbum ex verbo reddens, quod omnino contemnit sed sensuum exprimens veritatem, quibus utitur ad id quod voluerit exprimendum” (quoted by Weiss 58-9).

⁴⁷ Fee 109 speaks of “an amalgamation of OT texts that had already been joined and reflected on in apocalyptic Judaism, which Paul knew either directly or indirectly.”

⁴⁸ D. Instone Brewer, *Techniques and Assumptions in Jewish Exegesis before 70 CE* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1992) 22-3.

⁴⁹ Cf. Beuken, *Jesaja IIIB*, 9; Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66*, 386.

5 συναντήσεται γὰρ τοῖς ποιοῦσιν τὸ
δίκαιον,
καὶ τῶν ὁδῶν σου μνησθήσονται.

בְּדֶרֶךְיָ יִזְכָּרוּךְ

64:1 If you should open heaven,
trembling from you would seize the
mountains
and they would melt
2 as wax melts from the fire.
And fire shall burn up your adversaries,
and the name of the Lord shall be manifest
among your adversaries;
nations shall be confused at your presence!
3 When you do glorious deeds,
trembling from you will seize the
mountains.
4 From ages past we have not heard,
nor have our eyes seen
any God besides you, and your works,
which you will do to those who wait for
mercy.
5 For he will meet those who do what is
right,
and they will remember your ways.

63:19 O that you would tear open the
heavens and come down,
so that the mountains would quake at your
presence –
64:1 as when fire kindles brushwood and
the fire causes water to boil –
to make known your name to your
adversaries,
so that the nations might tremble at your
presence!
2 When you did awesome deeds
that we did not expect, you came down,
the mountains quaked at your presence.
3 From ages past no one has heard,
no ear perceived, no eye has seen
any God besides you,
who works for those who wait for him.
4 You meet those who gladly do right,
those who remember you in your ways.

After the call on God in 63:15 to look down from heaven, the verses MT 63:19–64:4a contain a plea for God to ‘come down’ (יִרְדָּךְ). Even though the LXX avoids this expression in 64:1 and 2, both LXX and MT call on a new divine initiative and a manifestation of God’s power within the history of the people in the form of ‘glorious actions’ (LXX ἐνδοξα) or ‘awesome deeds’ (MT נוֹרְאוֹת). This coming will deeply affect nature (v.1), the nations (v.2) and Israel (vv.3–4). The clause MT 64:2b repeats 63:19b (“you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence”)⁵⁰ and recalls the theophany at

⁵⁰ The clause in LXX 64:3b (“trembling from you will seize the mountains”) represents MT 64:2b. The Hebrew and Greek differ in meaning but have exactly the same words here as in the earlier verses MT 63:19b and LXX 64:1b. This suggests an early gloss in the Hebrew (BHS; BHK; Duhm 471; Westermann 395). Beuken, *Jesaja IIIB*, 30 defends its authenticity on the ground that יִרְדָּךְ with its independent position towards the preceding and following colon functions as a ‘pivot’ or ‘prosody modifier’ in the text. König, *Jesaja*, 521, says the phrase “soll ein Ploke-ähnliches Echo zu 19b bilden.”

Sinai. The Hebrew infinitive **בַּעֲשׂוֹתָךְ** leaves the time of action undetermined,⁵¹ but probably refers to the past events.⁵²

The LXX's ὅταν with the subjunctive ποιῇς, however, refers to an action in the future or to repeated action.⁵³ There is therefore in the Septuagint continuity of thought between “when you do glorious deeds” (LXX 64:3a) and “from ages past we have not heard, nor have our eyes seen any God besides you, and your works, which you will do ...” (v.4). The Septuagint uses the future tense throughout 64:1–5a and situates all divine action in the future, while the Hebrew is less explicit about the time of action.⁵⁴ Nevertheless, the phrase, “that we did not expect” (MT **לֹא נִכְנָה**, not in LXX),⁵⁵ indicates that the “awesome acts” (**נִרְאָוֹת**) of God are not known in advance and that YHWH is held to reveal himself in the near future in a completely new way.⁵⁶ We have already encountered the element of unpredictability regarding divine action particularly in Isa 29:14 and its context.⁵⁷

The plus of LXX compared to MT, καὶ τὰ ἔργα σου, ἃ ..., makes explicit that God's *works* have not been perceived. The book of Isaiah emphasizes God's work in history. He acts as he has planned (46:10). Even the heathen king Cyrus carries out his designs (44:28). After the blindness exposed in LXX Isa 29:10–12, Isa 29:23 speaks of the time when the people will see his works (ὅταν ἴδωσιν τὰ τέκνα αὐτῶν τὰ ἔργα μου). It is a serious fault when the leaders do not consider the works of the Lord (τὰ δὲ ἔργα κυρίου οὐκ ἐμβλέπουσιν καὶ τὰ ἔργα τῶν χειρῶν αὐτοῦ οὐ κατανοοῦσιν, LXX Isa 5:12). Scripture speaks very often of the work or works of the Lord, but this language is nearly foreign to the New Testament.⁵⁸ The expression is probably too general to convey the new things God has done in Christ. 1 Cor 2:9b likewise does not employ the Isaian τὰ ἔργα, but only uses the relative pronoun ἃ.

The verb **חכה** in **לְמַחְכֵּה-לוֹ** (“to those who wait for him,” v.3) does not occur elsewhere in Isa 40–66, but has a significant prehistory in Isa 8:16 and 30:18. Originally belonging to the language of the Psalms, in the Prophets the term has come to mean the persevering look forward to the fulfilment of prophecies.⁵⁹ The LXX specifies waiting for God's direct involvement as waiting for mercy (ἐλεος).

⁵¹ E.g. NRSV has “when you did,” Duhm, *Jesaja*, 471 has “(Furchtbares) tuend,” and Westermann, *Isaiah 40–66*, 391 translates “because thou doest.”

⁵² Volz, *Jesaja II*, 275: **נִרְאָוֹת** “ist Terminus für die Urzeitwunder” (cf. Deut 10:21; Ps 106:22).

⁵³ BDF §382.3: *Eventualis* or *Iterativus*.

⁵⁴ The equivalent of the LXX 64:4 ποιήσεις (“you will do”) is the MT imperfect **יַעֲשֶׂה**, “who works” (NRSV) or “who will work.”

⁵⁵ 1QIsa^a, however, has no negation and reads “that we did expect” (Not in BHS, but according to The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible, 376, n. 1405)

⁵⁶ Cf. Beuken, *Jesaja IIIB*, 33.

⁵⁷ See chapter 8.2.1.

⁵⁸ Cf. G. von Rad, “Das Werk Jahwes,” in *Studia Biblica et Semitica* (FS T.C. Vriezen; Wageningen: Veenman, 1966) 290–8, who speaks of a deep break in tradition (297–8).

⁵⁹ Beuken, *Jesaja IIIB*, 33–4.

1 Cor 2:9	LXX Isa 64:4	MT Isa 64:3
Ἄ ὁφθαλμὸς οὐκ εἶδεν καὶ οὖς οὐκ ἤκουσεν ἃ ἡτοίμασεν ὁ θεὸς τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτόν	4 ἀπὸ τοῦ αἰῶνος οὐκ ἠκούσαμεν οὐδὲ οἱ ὁφθαλμοὶ ἡμῶν εἶδον θεὸν πλὴν σοῦ καὶ τὰ ἔργα σου, ἃ ποιήσεις τοῖς ὑπομένουσιν ἔλεον.	3 וְיַעֲזֹרֵם לֹא-שָׁמְעוּ לֹא הִאֲזִינוּ עֵין לֹא-רָאָתָהּ אֱלֹהִים זִוְלָתָךְ יַעֲשֶׂה לְמַחְכֵּה-לּוֹ:

MT Isa 64:2-3 and LXX 64:3-4 show a number of similarities with 1 Cor 2:9.

- The literal equivalent of the first phrase of 1 Cor 2:9, “eye has not seen,” (ὁφθαλμὸς οὐκ εἶδεν) is found in MT Isa 64:3b. The Septuagint has the plural “our eyes have not seen.”
- The second phrase of 1 Cor 2:9, “ear has not heard,” (οὖς οὐκ ἤκουσεν) corresponds more or less with “we have not heard” (οὐκ ἠκούσαμεν). The LXX-translator’s tendency called ‘personalization’ probably occasioned the change from 3rd person plural (MT) to 1st person plural (LXX).⁶⁰
- The order of the sentence elements differs. 1 Cor 2:9 has the order seeing-hearing, but Isa 64:3 first has hearing and then seeing. Isa 6:10b, however, we find the same order of the three elements eye(s)-ear(s)-heart as in 1 Cor 2:9 (μήποτε ἴδωσιν τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς, καὶ τοῖς ὠσὶν ἀκούσωσιν καὶ τῇ καρδίᾳ συνῶσιν). This may indicate that 1 Cor 2:9 also reacts to and overturns the negative programmatic prophecy of Isa 6:10.
- The syntax of 1 Cor 2:9b corresponds with the construction of LXX Isa 64:3. After a denial of vision and hearing in the past, the texts introduce what God does with τὰ ἔργα σου, ἃ ποιήσεις in Isaiah and ἃ ἡτοίμασεν in 1 Corinthians.
- The last phrase τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτόν has a different verb but a construction that agrees with “those who wait for him,” MT Isa 64:3 (לְמַחְכֵּה-לּוֹ); LXX has ἔλεον instead of αὐτόν.

To have ‘eyes that see’ is an important expression, even a key expression in the book of Isaiah and a characteristic feature of salvation. LXX Isa 40:5 says, “all flesh shall see the salvation of God.” In 6:5 the prophet exclaims in his inaugural vision: “My eyes have seen the King.” In 33:17 the people are promised “Your eyes (LXX: ‘you’) will see the King in his beauty.” It seems that the prophet’s inaugural vision was a proleptic view of what the remnant of the people would see in the future. We also read, “your eyes will see Jerusalem” (33:20 MT and LXX). The restoration of vision and the return of hearing are heard like a refrain throughout the book, particularly in chapters 28-33 (29:18; 30:20; 32:3; 33:17,20). With regard to the latter part of the book, after a reference to a lack of eye-sight and heart-understanding in 44:18, positive statements on eyes that see return in

⁶⁰ Baer, *Translation*, 53-84.

52:8, 10. Here, moreover, the vision becomes universal: “all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.”

I Cor 2:9b and Isa 65:16-17

The phrase in 1 Cor 2:9b, “come up in the heart,” retains the Hebrew idiom in the Greek (BDR §4⁸). The first question that has to be decided is whether the phrase can be traced to Scripture. We need to look at particular passages which contain the phrase “(and) has not come up in the heart of man.” A number of places contain the phrase. Some places have God as subject, e.g. in Jer 39:35 and Jer 51:21.⁶¹ Places, which, like 1 Cor 2:9, have man as subject may concern a particular object, such as the ark in Jer 3:16,⁶² sly ideas in Ezek 38:10,⁶³ and the amount one wants to give for the temple in 4 Kgdms 12:5.⁶⁴ Compared with these references, Isa 65:16 comes closest to 1 Cor 2:9 because both texts have man as subject and thoughts as object. Moreover, Isa 65:16-17 belongs to the larger context as Isa 64:4 (LXX), the text already present in 1 Cor 2:9.

LXX 65:15b-18

τοῖς δὲ δουλεύουσιν αὐτῷ κληθήσεται ὄνομα
καινόν,
16 ὃ εὐλογηθήσεται ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς·
εὐλογήσουσιν γὰρ τὸν θεὸν τὸν ἀληθινόν,
καὶ οἱ ὀμνύοντες ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ὁμοῦνται τὸν θεὸν
τὸν ἀληθινόν·
ἐπιλήσονται γὰρ τὴν θλίψιν αὐτῶν τὴν πρώτην,
καὶ οὐκ ἀναβήσεται αὐτῶν ἐπὶ τὴν καρδίαν.
17 ἔσται γὰρ ὁ οὐρανὸς καινός
καὶ ἡ γῆ καινή,
καὶ οὐ μὴ μνησθῶσιν τῶν προτέρων,
οὐδ’ οὐ μὴ ἐπέλθῃ αὐτῶν ἐπὶ τὴν καρδίαν.
18 ἀλλ’ εὐφροσύνην καὶ ἀγαλλίαμα εὐρήσουσιν ἐν
αὐτῇ·
ὅτι ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ ποιῶ Ἱερουσαλημ ἀγαλλίαμα
καὶ τὸν λαόν μου εὐφροσύνην.

MT Isa 65:15b-18

וְלַעֲבָדָיו יִקְרָא שֵׁם אַחֵר:
16 אֲשֶׁר הִמְתַּבְּרָה בְּאָרֶץ
יִתְבָּרַךְ בְּאֱלֹהֵי אָמֵן
וְהִנֵּשְׁבַע בְּאָרֶץ
יִשְׁבַּע בְּאֱלֹהֵי אָמֵן
כִּי נִשְׁכַּח הַצָּרוֹת הָרָאשֹׁנוֹת
וְכִי נִסְתָּרוּ מַעֲיָנֵי:
17 כִּי־הִנְנִי בּוֹרֵא שְׁמַיִם חֲדָשִׁים
וְאָרֶץ חֲדָשָׁה
וְלֹא תִזְכְּרָה הָרָאשֹׁנוֹת
וְלֹא תַעֲלִינָה עַל־לֵב
18 כִּי־אִם־שִׂישׁוּ וְגִילוּ עַד־עַד
אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי בּוֹרֵא
כִּי הִנְנִי בּוֹרֵא אֶת־יְרוּשָׁלַם גִּילָה
וְעִמָּה מְשׁוּשׁ:

15b But to those who are subject to him,
a new name shall be called,
16 which shall be blessed on the earth;
for they shall bless the true God,
and those who swear on the earth

15b But to his servants
he will give a different name.
16 Then whoever invokes a blessing in the
land, shall bless by the God of faithfulness,
and whoever takes an oath in the land

⁶¹ In LXX Jer 51:21 the clause stands parallel with “did not the Lord remember it?” (ἐμνήσθη κύριος, καὶ ἀνέβη ἐπὶ τὴν καρδίαν αὐτοῦ;).

⁶² οὐκ ἐροῦσιν ἔτι Κιβωτὸς διαθήκης ἁγίου Ἰσραηλ, οὐκ ἀναβήσεται ἐπὶ καρδίαν.

⁶³ ἀναβήσεται ῥήματα ἐπὶ τὴν καρδίαν σου, καὶ λογίῃ λογισμοὺς πονηροὺς.

⁶⁴ πᾶν ἄργύριον, ὃ ἐὰν ἀναβῇ ἐπὶ καρδίαν ἀνδρὸς ἐνεγκεῖν ἐν οἴκῳ κυρίου.

shall swear by the true God,
for they shall forget their first affliction,
and it shall not come up into their heart.
17 For heaven will be new,
and the earth will be new,
and they shall not remember the former
things,
nor shall they come upon their heart.
18 but they shall find joy and gladness
in it,
because look, I am making Ierousalem as
gladness, and my people as a joy.

shall swear by the God of faithfulness;
because the former troubles are forgotten
and are hidden from my sight.
17 For I am about to create new heavens
and a new earth;
the former things shall not be remembered
or come to mind.
18 But be glad and rejoice forever
in what I am creating;
for I am about to create Jerusalem as a joy,
and its people as a delight.

The LXX diverges from MT in the final line of 65:16 where in the place of נִסְתָּרוּ מֵעֵינַי we read καὶ οὐκ ἀναβήσεται αὐτῶν ἐπὶ τὴν καρδίαν. The clause is apparently derived from the ending of the next verse, 65:17 MT.⁶⁵ As a consequence the LXX has nearly the same phrase at the end of verse 16 as at the end of verse 17. The first of these occurrences is the closest parallel with 1 Cor 2:9, because it also has the verb ἀναβαίνω.⁶⁶

LXX Isa 65:16–17 has an outspoken eschatological emphasis. I propose the following chiasmic pattern, which highlights this emphasis, in having the new creation as the central statement. This central line (C) is enclosed by what has not come up in the heart (B and B') and finally held together by expressions of eschatological joy (A, A'):

A they shall bless the true God ... (16a)
 B they shall forget their first affliction / it shall not come up into their heart
 (16b)
 C heaven will be new and the earth will be new (17a)
 B' they shall not remember the former things / nor shall they come upon
 their heart (17b)
 A' they shall find joy and gladness in it (18).

Some remarks can be made on this structure, especially in the area of semantics:

(A–A') In verse 18 we read ἄλλ' εὐφροσύνην καὶ ἀγαλλίαμα εὐρήσουσιν ἐν αὐτῇ. In the Septuagint ἀγαλλιάομαι relates to worship, to the celebration of what God has done on behalf of his people.⁶⁷ This joy is also present in LXX Isa 29:19, announcing

⁶⁵ It seems that the LXX translator wished to avoid to attribute 'eyes' to God. cf. the rendition of נִסְתָּרוּ מֵעֵינַי with τὸ πονηρὸν ἐναντίον ἐμοῦ a few verses earlier in 65:12.

⁶⁶ The Hebrew version of Isa 65:17 is also possible as source because the Greek equivalent of עֲלָה is not ἐπέρχομαι but ἀναβαίνω. HR shows that ἀναβαίνω is nearly always a translation of עֲלָה in the LXX, while the translation of עֲלָה with ἐπέρχομαι in 65:17 is not found elsewhere in the LXX.

⁶⁷ "Der Sinn des Wortes ist die kultische Freude, die Gottes Hilfe und Taten feiert und preist, sowohl die dem Volk wie die dem einzelnen erwiesenen" (Bultmann, "ἀγαλλιάομαι," *TWNT* 1:19). In the LXX ἀγαλλιάομαι primarily renders גִּיל, which in the Prophets often expresses

that “the poor will rejoice (ἀγαλλιάσονται πτωχοί) with gladness because of the Lord.” The verb typically belongs to the language of worship in the Psalms, but also occurs 10 times in poetic parts of LXX Isaiah. The passage Isa 65:13-19 is full of eschatological joy; the verb and the noun ἀγαλλίαμα occur twice, in the company of the noun and verb εὐφροσύνη (3 times) and εὐφραίνω (2 times). In verses 18-19 the ‘joy’ and ‘gladness’ concern a newly established Jerusalem.

(B-B’) Isa 65:17b reads οὐ μὴ μνησθῶσιν τῶν προτέρων in parallel with οὐδ’ οὐ μὴ ἐπέλθῃ αὐτῶν ἐπὶ τὴν καρδίαν. In this text the things that will no longer come to mind are the sufferings of the past. This means that these things in the first place have a negative connotation and in the second place have already been known. 1 Cor 2:9, however, implies good things because they have been “prepared for those who love him,” and also things yet unknown because no human has ever thought of them. When we take Isa 65:16-17 as source text of 1 Cor 2:9, we witness here a significant transformation. This turn towards a positive understanding in 1 Cor 2:9 has probably been occasioned by the central statement of the chiastic structure.

(C) The creation of a new heavens and a new earth (v.17a), signifies that a mere improvement does not suffice. It will be created new and only in this way is the eschatological change fully guaranteed.⁶⁸ The Septuagint does not use the verb ‘to create,’⁶⁹ but the meaning of verse 17 is elaborated in LXX and MT in 65:19-25 with the same radically new living conditions. MT speaks also of the creation of Jerusalem (ptc. of בָּרָא, v.18b). This text contains both the new earth and the new Jerusalem. Verse 17 places the salvation of Judah and Jerusalem in vv. 18-25 within a much larger, creationwide, perspective.⁷⁰

1 Cor 2:9b

καὶ ἐπὶ καρδίαν ἀνθρώπου οὐκ ἀνέβη,

Isa 65:16b

καὶ οὐκ ἀναβήσεται αὐτῶν ἐπὶ τὴν καρδίαν.

A significant departure in 1 Cor 2:9 is the plus of ἀνθρώπου. It is likely that this word is meant to give the text a sharp edge as part of the argument in 1 Cor 1:18-3:23. For in 1 Cor 1-4 ἄνθρωπος is not a neutral term but a discounted source of wisdom (cf. 2:13; 3:3, 4; 4:3 and esp. 3:21 in parallel with σάρξ in 1:29).

1 Cor 2:9c

The final line of 1 Cor 2:9c adds “that which God has prepared for those who love him” (ὃ ἡτοίμασεν ὁ θεὸς τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτόν). “What God has prepared” remains a phrase of uncertain origin. Still, it is not very likely that Paul supplied these words himself,

‘eschatological praise’ (Isa 49:13; 61:10; 66:10), and in general “die freudige, jubelnde Reaktion auf ein Ereignis, in der Mehrzahl der Stellen auf eine rettende oder befreiende Tat Gottes” (C. Westermann, “גִּיל,” *THAT* 1:417).

⁶⁸ Volz, *Jesaja II*, 286.

⁶⁹ ἔσται γὰρ ὁ οὐρανὸς καινὸς καὶ ἡ γῆ καινή (65:17).

⁷⁰ Cf. Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66*, 408.

because the verb ἐτοιμάζω and its cognates are rare in his letters.⁷¹ In Phlm 22 he uses the verb in a non-religious sense (“prepare a guest room for me”). Because the religious sense is hardly found at all in the Greek world,⁷² we need to look for the verb in biblical Greek. Does Scripture employ an expression like ἃ ἡτοίμασεν ὁ θεός? In the Septuagint the verb and its cognates often describe divine action in creation and in history. The primary equivalent of ἐτοιμάζω in the MT is כּוּן. In the hymnic language of the Psalms ἐτοιμάζω / כּוּן conveys that God prepared the earth (e.g. Ψ 23:2) for the well-being of his creatures by his power (Ψ 64:7) or by his goodness (Ψ 67:11), and according to Proverbs he prepared the heavens by his wisdom (3:19; 8:27). In Job 28 God’s wisdom remains hidden from men but man witnesses his creation in the variety that God has prepared (28:27).⁷³ It is plausible that ἐτοιμάζω in 1 Cor 2:9 derives from Scripture because in the LXX the verb often refers to God’s creative work for the benefit of man. This sense fits the Isaianic context (“new heaven and new earth,” Isa 65:17) of the preceding line of 1 Cor 2:9 so that ἃ ἡτοίμασεν ὁ θεός will have been evoked by the composite quotation 1 Cor 2:9. The clause is to be regarded as a *topos* from Scripture.

The indirect object of “which God has prepared” is “for those who love him” (τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτόν). This phrase has a different verb but the same construction as “for those who wait for him” (לְמַחְכֵּה-לוֹ, LXX τοῖς ὑπομένουσιν ἔλεον) of Isa 64:3(LXX 4). We may therefore link its form with Isa 64:3(4). For the origin of the expression itself we need to look elsewhere. Chapter 9 argued that election in 1 Cor 1:27–28 is likely related to the *locus classicus* on election, LXX Deut 7:7–9.⁷⁴ Furthermore, election is closely associated with love in Scripture. LXX Isa 41:8 says about Abraham ὃν ἡγάπησα in parallel with ὃν ἐξελεξάμην. Love in the sense of loyalty is required from both partners in the covenant. The Decalogue speaks of “those who love me” (LXX Ex 20:6 and Deut 5:10).⁷⁵ In Deuteronomy “to love YHWH is a summary of the covenant.”⁷⁶

Not only is “those who love him” at home in the sphere of election and covenant, the phrase also occurs in wisdom writings. We refer to Sir 1:10, where the Lord gives wisdom “to those who love him,” but also to Proverbs for the idea of a (reciprocal, e.g. Prov 8:17, 21) love by wisdom and love for wisdom.⁷⁷ The phrase is evidently a *topos* and

⁷¹ As cognate προετοιμάζω appears in a religious sense in Rom 9:23 and ἔτοιμος occurs in 2 Cor 9:5; 10:6, 16.

⁷² Cf. W. Grundmann, “ἔτοιμος, κτλ,” *TWNT* 2:702, mentioning as possible exception the preparation of animals for sacrifice in Homer (702, n.2).

⁷³ Cf. Koch, “כּוּן,” *TWAT* 4:103–4.

⁷⁴ “Know therefore that the Lord your God is God, the faithful God who maintains covenant loyalty with those who love him.”

⁷⁵ In Isa 41:8 love features as loyalty towards the covenant partner in the context of election. The apposition אֲהַבֵּנִי in a divine speech may be translated as ‘who loves me’ (Westermann, *Isaiah* 40–66, 70; König, *Jesaja*, 363; otherwise Beuken, *Jesaja* IIA 73 and Elliger, *Deuterojesaja*, 138: ‘my friend’), but LXX has true to the context, ὃν ἡγάπησα, “whom I love.”

⁷⁶ Beuken, *Jesaja* IIA 73. Yet, “Liebe zu Gott als subjektives religiöses Gefühl kommt im AT kaum vor, was beim Fehlen der mystischen Religiosität nicht verwundert” (E. Jenni, “אָהַב,” *THAT* 1:72).

⁷⁷ Jenni, *THAT* 1:72.

does not point to any biblical writing in particular. Elsewhere in his letters Paul also uses the expression (Rom 8:28). In conclusion, 1 Cor 2:9 is a composite quotation with elements of MT Isa 64:3/ LXX 64:4 and Isa 65:16–17. The elements from the passages of Isaiah have the loose form of implicit quotations.

2.3 The quotation in 1 Cor 2:16

1 Cor 2:16a
 τίς γὰρ ἔγνω νοῦν κυρίου,
 ὃς συμβιβάσει αὐτόν;

LXX Isa 40:13
 τίς ἔγνω νοῦν κυρίου,
 καὶ τίς αὐτοῦ σύμβουλος ἐγένετο,
 ὃς συμβιβᾷ αὐτόν;

Should we regard 1 Cor 2:16a as an explicit or implicit quotation? The latter view seems appropriate when we note that an introductory formula is lacking and the second clause of Isa 40:13 has been omitted. Yet, the conjunction γὰρ in 1 Cor 2:16 fulfils an introductory role, and the receptor text and source text still have seven words in common. The reason for the omission of the second line will be intentional and not caused by a lack of knowledge on the part of the author. He quotes the second line (and leaves the last line out) in Rom 11:34. “Paul knew one form (quite close to the LXX) and quoted it in two different ways.”⁷⁸ For the rest, there is only an orthographic difference between the Attic future of LXX’s συμβιβᾷ,⁷⁹ and the regular future συμβιβάσει of Paul’s letter. We now consider the phrasing of the quotation in its context in both MT and Septuagint.

Isa 40:12–14

The verses Isa 40:12–14 are characterized by the repeated rhetorical question ‘who?’ (including ‘whom?’ in v.14). The MT has four of these questions, but the Septuagint seven. These rhetorical questions bring the hearers to agree with some unassailable starting points. The speech does not mean to stop after these questions but seeks to lead them to the acceptance of other statements.⁸⁰ ‘Disputation’ is the genre often attributed to the Hebrew text Isa 40:12–31,⁸¹ and because of the prominent role of wisdom forms, Dijkstra calls the poem of Isa 40:12–31 a “fine specimen of wisdom discourse.”⁸² The passage combines the language of praise and wisdom in order to instil a new perspective, “to aver that God was lord of creation and of history.”⁸³ What is interesting in this passage is its emphasis on God’s creation in combination with his hidden action in history. Both

⁷⁸ Wagner, *Heralds*, 304.

⁷⁹ Cf. F.C. Conybeare and S.G. Stock, *Grammar of Septuagint Greek* (1905; repr., Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1988) §21b.

⁸⁰ Elliger, *Deuterocesaja*, 44.

⁸¹ Westermann, *Isaiah 40–66*, 48; Elliger, *Deuterocesaja*, 44;

⁸² M. Dijkstra, “Lawsuit, Debate and Wisdom Discourse,” in *Studies in the Book of Isaiah* (ed. J van Ruiten and M. Vervenne; Leuven: Peeters, 1997) 258.

⁸³ Westermann, *Isaiah 40–66*, 49.

creation and history point beyond the world, to a God who cannot be compared with anything in this world (τίμι με ὠμοιῶσατε καὶ ἰσωθήσομαι; 40:25). God works in creation, but also exercises power over earthly rulers (ὁ διδοὺς ἄρχοντας εἰς οὐδὲν ἄρχειν, v.23). While the role of his wisdom in history has already been shown in earlier chapters of the book in relation to Judah (28:23-29; 31:2) and its powerful neighbors (Assyria 14:24-27; Egypt 19:11-15), Isa 40:12-26 looks at divine wisdom from a larger, cosmic perspective. Against a background of seas and heavens, mountains and hills, and endless numbers of stars (vv. 13, 26), man appears as a grasshopper on earth (v. 22).

LXX Isa 40:12-14

12 Τίς ἐμέτρησεν τῇ χειρὶ τὸ ὕδωρ
καὶ τὸν οὐρανὸν σπιθαμῇ
καὶ πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν δρακί;
τίς ἔστησεν τὰ ὄρη σταθμῷ
καὶ τὰς νάπας ζυγῷ;
13 τίς ἔγνω νοῦν κυρίου,
καὶ τίς αὐτοῦ σύμβουλος ἐγένετο,
ὃς συμβιβίῃ αὐτόν;
14 ἢ πρὸς τίνα συνεβουλεύσατο
καὶ συνεβίβασεν αὐτόν;
ἢ τίς ἔδειξεν αὐτῷ κρίσιν;
ἢ ὁδὸν συνέσεως τίς ἔδειξεν αὐτῷ;

12 Who has measured the water
with his hand
and heaven with a span
and all the earth by handful?
Who has weighed the mountains with a
scale
and the forests with a balance?
13 Who has known the mind of the Lord,
and who has been his counsellor to instruct
him?
14 Or with whom did he consult, and he
instructed him?
Or who showed him judgment?
Or who showed him the way of
understanding?

MT Isa 40:12-14

12 מִי־מָדַד בְּשַׁעְלוֹ מַיִם
וְשָׁמַיִם בַּזָּרֶת תִּכְּן
וְכָל בְּשָׁלֵשׁ עֶפְרָהּ הָאָרֶץ
וְשָׁקָל בַּפֶּלֶס הָרִים
וְנִבְעוֹת בַּמֶּאֱזָנִים:
13 מִי־תִכְּן אֶת־רוּחַ יְהוָה
וְאִישׁ עֲצָתוֹ
יֹדִיעֵנוּ:
14 אֶת־מִי נֹעֵץ
וַיְבִינֵהוּ
וַיִּלְמְדֵהוּ בְּאֶרֶחַ מִשְׁפָּט
וַיִּלְמְדֵהוּ דַּעַת
וְדֶרֶךְ תְּבוֹנוֹת יֹדִיעֵנוּ:

12 Who has measured the waters in the
hollow of his hand
and marked off the heavens with a span,
enclosed the dust of the earth in a measure,
and weighed the mountains in scales
and the hills in a balance?
13 Who has directed the spirit of the Lord,
or as his counsellor instructed him?
14 Whom did he consult for his
enlightenment,
and who taught him the path of justice?
Who taught him knowledge,
and showed him the way of
understanding?

MT Isa 40:13a reemploys the verb ‘measure’ (תִּכְּן) that in verse 12 refers to the heavens, and applies it to the spirit of the creator. The suggestion is that if nobody is able to measure creation, how can anyone measure the creator? This understanding is conveyed by the NEB with, “who has with a span set limits to the heavens?” and “who has set limits to the Spirit if the Lord?” The NRSV, however, translates “who has directed the spirit of

the Lord?” which agrees with the parallel line 13b concerning the activity of the counsellor.

This shows that the line Isa 40:13a can be joined to what precedes but also to what follows. Isa 40:13a has a bridge position between the practical activity of the architect (verse 12) and the theoretical activity of the counselor (verses 13b-14). Verse 13a is connected in MT with with what precedes, the LXX with what follows. The sense of MT Isa 40:13a is practical but LXX interprets the line as expressing a theoretical activity. The Septuagint distils from the figurative use of the concrete language of measuring (תכּוּן Pi) the idea of knowledge. This translation accounts to a large extent for the rather surprising rendering of רִוּחַ with νοῦς. It is a unique rendering for the Septuagint but consistent in the context of the sentence by giving the verb ‘to know’ as object the cognitive term ‘mind.’

Does the אִישׁ עֲצָתוֹ (‘man of his counsel,’ or ‘counsellor’) provide God with advice or does he receive understanding from God? Some choose the latter option and read “who is the counsellor whom he instructed?”⁸⁴ However, after the questions in verses 12 and 13a, directed to persons as subject, it is likely that we should understand אִישׁ עֲצָתוֹ also as subject. This results in the rendering, “who has directed the spirit of the Lord, and (who was) his counsellor, (who)⁸⁵ instructed him?”⁸⁶ The LXX translates with σύμβουλος, a noun that occurs 12 times in the LXX, but the use of σύμβουλος for אִישׁ עֲצָתוֹ is unique. This word choice of the LXX, together with ἔγνων for תִּכְּן and νοῦς for רִוּחַ, makes LXX Isa 40:13 a creative and effective rendering of the Hebrew. In the Septuagint the verb συμβιβάζω has the sense of authoritative instruction given by God (Ex 4:12), by Moses (Ex 18:16), and by a father to his children (Deut 4:9).⁸⁷ Is 40:13 asks whether instruction can go in the opposite direction. Συμβιβάζω is used again as equivalent of בִּיַּן Hi in LXX Isa 40:14.

The text of LXX 40:12-14 exhibits parallelism with synonymous verbs in the lines 13b-14a, and chiasm in verse 14b, in which A=A’:

13 τίς ἔγνων νοῦν κυρίου,
καὶ τίς αὐτοῦ σύμβουλος ἐγένετο, ὃς συμβιβᾷ αὐτόν;
14 ἢ πρὸς τίνα συνεβουλεύσατο καὶ συνεβίβασεν αὐτόν;
ἢ τίς ἔδειξεν αὐτῷ (A) κρίσιν (B);
ἢ ὁδὸν συνέσεως (B’) τίς ἔδειξεν αὐτῷ (A’);

⁸⁴ Cf. Elliger, *Deuterocesaja*, 53, who also understands 40:14 in this manner; Goldingay 103, interprets אִישׁ עֲצָתוֹ too specifically in agreement with Isa 46:11 (‘man of my purpose,’ concerning Cyrus) and arrives at “as for the man of his purpose, who could instruct him?”

⁸⁵ We need to supply ‘who’; the poetic language of these chapters probably omits אֲשֶׁר before יוֹדִיעֵנִי (cf. Isa 41:2, 24; GK §155n).

⁸⁶ cf. NRSV; NEB; NIV; J.A. Alexander, *A Commentary on the Prophecies of Isaiah 2* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1953) 104; Duhm, *Jesaja*, 294; König, *Jesaja*, 356; Whybray, *Counsellor*, 18; Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66*, 50. MT אִישׁ עֲצָתוֹ can be read as two separate words or as a compound expression. In the first case אִישׁ and עֲצָתוֹ stand by themselves as ‘man’ and ‘his counsel,’ in the second case אִישׁ עֲצָתוֹ is taken as ‘his counsellor.’ The Septuagint chooses the latter and this is the better option (cf. Ps 119:24).

⁸⁷ MT has in the latter two texts, just like in Isa 40:13, ידע Hi.

Within this structure the line τίς ἔγνω νοῦν κυρίου has a certain amount of independence. It shares the interrogative pronoun with its context, but is excluded from the three sets of parallelism (12a corresponds with 12b, 13b with 14a, 14b with 14c). There is only a weak link with 13b,⁸⁸ but verses 13b–14 amount to a commentary on the meaning of verse 13a and the rest of Isa 40 proceeds along the same lines: man cannot capture God and his thinking. The expression νοῦς κυρίου in 40:13 refers especially to God's thoughts (cf. 'my plans' αἱ βουλαί μου).⁸⁹ The idea 'mind (νοῦς) of the Lord,' in the sense of 'what he thinks' or 'what his plans are' is also found in Jdt 8:14.

3. Reception of Scripture in 1 Cor 2

3.1 Discontinuity

Wisdom revealed

The wisdom of God in 1 Cor 2:7 is called secret, hidden, prepared before time and issuing in glory. This language manifests a discontinuity with Scripture and an affinity with apocalyptic literature. In 1 Corinthians, with "before all ages," God's wisdom reaches far back into the past. Its origin precedes 'this age' (2:6) and 'this world' (1:20–21). Paul thinks in terms of "the ends of the ages" (10:11), and for him 'this age' (1:20; 2:6, etc.) is the stage that witnesses unwittingly the manifestation of the wisdom of God. The reception of this wisdom depends on revelation. In apocalyptic writings revelation is a gift to sages (e.g. Dan 2:21, 30). In these writings revelation is restricted to the apocalyptic seer. In 1 Cor 2:6–16, however, revelation is given to the whole community even though there is no reception than through God's Spirit. The Spirit is particularly prominent in 1 Cor 1–4 in the pericope 2:10–16 on revelation (see Chapter 6.2 revelation).

In 1 Cor 2:16 a very important intertextual transformation takes place. The effectual meaning of Isa 40:13a, "nobody knows the mind of the Lord" is thoroughly revised by means of the response, "but we have the mind of Christ" in 1 Cor 2:16. The question "Who has known the mind of the Lord?" now receives a positive answer with an exclamation. Yet, there are three qualifications: 1) The 'Lord' is now 'Christ.' This means that the mind of the Lord is known in Christ (cf. "you are in Christ" 1:30). 2) The subject is 'we.' The mind of Christ is for 'us' who have received the Spirit of God (2:12). 3) 'Know' is now 'have,' which does not signify ownership, but the reception of a gift that becomes ineffective when 'we' are determined by the flesh and not by the Spirit (3:1–

⁸⁸ The loose connection with 13b makes it easier to understand the different form of the quotations in 1 Cor 2:16 and Rom 11:34. The first combines 13a with 13bβ, the second 13a with 13bα.

⁸⁹ GELS s.v.2: "that which is on one's mind," as in Josh 14:7 Chaleb spoke according to the mind of Moses.

4). The mind of Christ in 2:16 corresponds with the wisdom of God in 2:6. Just like the wisdom of God is for the τελείοι, so the mind of Christ is for the πνευματικοί.

Vision downplayed

Blindness and vision play a large role in Isaiah. “They do not see,” and “they do not know,” run through the book like a refrain (6:10, 29:10),⁹⁰ but we also hear a different note: “out of their gloom and darkness the eyes of the blind shall see” (29:18). The book of Isaiah opens with the word ‘vision’ (חֵזְיוֹן, ὄρασις). In the Septuagint Isa 13:1, 19:1, and 33:6 translate the Hebrew heading ‘burden’ (שָׁמַר) with ‘vision’ (ὄρασις). Isa 6:1 relates the prophet’s vision of the Lord enthroned as king and LXX Isa 33:17, 20 promises the people that they “will see a king with glory,” “a land from far away,” and “Jerusalem, a wealthy city.” LXX Isa 40:5 says that “the glory of the Lord shall appear, and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.” Seeing visions is a present experience for the prophet and a prospect for the people in the book of Isaiah. Vision also plays an important role in the original contexts of the composite quotation in 1 Cor 2:9. Isa 64:4 is part of a theophany, 52:13–53:1 concerns the perception of the enigmatic servant, and 65:17 envisions a new heaven and a new earth.

When we turn to 1 Cor 2, the expression κύριος της δόξης (2:8) suggests the vision of the Messiah as king. Those who do not see it are truly blind, because δόξα is an eminently visual affair. The next verse, the quotation in 2:9, speaks of “what no eye has seen, nor ear heard, or come up in the heart of man.” Yet the text does not continue with “we have seen” or refer to a new vision in the text that follows. Considering the widespread presence of the theme of blindness and vision in Isaiah, one may wonder why Paul does not use this terminology in 1 Cor 1–4. Of course, he adopts “what no eye has seen,” in 2:9, but why does he not employ the language of vision elsewhere in 1 Cor 1–4? If the apostle was anxious to explain why many regard the word of the cross and God’s wisdom as foolishness, it would have been natural to say that they are blind and need to have their eyes opened. In the book of Acts Paul’s conversion experience is described as a transition from blindness to sight, Gentiles are depicted as groping in the dark in their search of God (17:27), and Jews are rebuked for their blindness with the words of Isa 6:9–10 (in 28:26–27). In a later letter to the Corinthians Paul shows that he has reflected on this theme (2 Cor 3:7–18). But in the context of wisdom Paul avoids the biblical language of vision. Is there be a reason for this reticence?

It has been discussed earlier that the ideas of the Corinthians were heavily influenced by Jewish–Hellenistic thought. In the writings of Philo vision is the primary means for receiving wisdom. Those who see are the elite, and Philo emphasizes that the name Israel means “he who sees God.” The importance of vision for Philo is illustrated with the following discussion, which moves from the supremacy of bodily vision to the supremacy of the ‘eyesight of the soul’:

⁹⁰ Jeremiah echoes his predecessor in e.g. 5:21: “Hear this, o foolish and senseless people, who have eyes, but do not see, who have ears, but do not hear.”

The nation is called in the Hebrew tongue Israel, which, being interpreted, is “He who sees God.” Now the sight of the eyes is the most excellent of all the senses, since by it alone we apprehend the most excellent of existing things, the sun and the moon and the whole heaven and world; but the sight of the mind, the dominant element in the soul, surpasses all the other faculties of the mind, and this is wisdom which is the sight of the understanding. But he to whom it is given not only to apprehend by means of knowledge all else that nature has to show, but also to see the Father and Maker of all, may rest assured that he is advanced to the crowning point of happiness; for nothing is higher than God, and who so has stretched the eyesight of the soul (τὸ τῆς ψυχῆς ὄμμα) to reach Him should pray that he may there abide and stand firm.⁹¹

Two things stand out in this passage: the supremacy of vision and the high view of the soul. For Philo, those who hear depend for instruction on those who have seen.⁹² Paul is not a complete stranger to this line of thinking. In 1 Cor 9:1 (“Have I not seen Jesus our Lord?”) and in 2 Cor 12:1 (“I will go on to visions and revelations of the Lord”) he uses the privilege of vision to defend his apostolic authority. It is therefore remarkable that in 1 Cor 2 dealing with revelation in the context of the Corinthian desire for wisdom, Paul avoids connecting wisdom with vision. The reason is that salvation does not come through spiritual vision but through faith in the crucified Messiah. Isaiah’s language of blindness and vision would easily be misunderstood in a Hellenistic context. In addition, notwithstanding his own occasional visionary experiences, the apostle’s general principle remains “faith comes from what is heard” (Rom 10:17). The spoken word is the means of revelation for Paul. He does not preach the *vision* of the cross and he does not even say, “they have not *seen* the Lord of glory.” He *preaches* the *word* of the cross and *speaks* God’s wisdom.

1 Cor 2 does not at all exploit the Isaianic language of vision in dealing with revelation. It seems to do the opposite. By describing the crucified Messiah as the Lord of glory, Paul rather emphasizes that God’s glory is a hidden glory in the present age. Moreover, by incorporating the Isaianic phrase on what man is not able to see without providing Isaiah’s correction that all flesh will see the salvation of God, Paul rejects vision as part of the present life of faith (cf. “we walk by faith, not by sight, 2 Cor 5:7). The way the apostle paints the kind of life he lives in he light of the cross in 1 Cor 4 completely agrees with the absence of glorious vision in 1 Cor 2. This absence forms a significant difference between pre-text and receptor text and can even be counted as an instance of intertextual transformation.

⁹¹ Philo, *Abr.* 57–58, Colson.

⁹² For Philo “God is seen by the wise” (ὁ θεὸς ὡφθῆναι τῷ σοφῷ, *Abr.* 80) and vision leads to man’s perfection (cf. W. Michaelis, ‘ὁράω,’ *TWNT* 5:335–8, 336). See chapter 4.2 Revelation.

3.2 Continuity

The role of rulers

Not the common people but the political and religious leaders are the primary target of the prophecies in the book of Isaiah. They are responsible for the state of the country and their failure results in national despair and confusion (e.g. Isa 1:10, 23, 26; 3:1-8, 12, 14-15; 7:1-17; 9:14-16; 10:1, 33). Of course, the people are not exempt from responsibility. The book starts with an appeal to the nation to use its own judgment (cf. 1:3, 18). Nevertheless, the leaders are often singled out (1:23, etc), because it is from good leadership that justice and peace will come (1:26). Within the book the vague contours of an ideal rule begin to take shape (9:6-7; 11:1-5). A vision says, “See, a king will reign in righteousness, and princes will rule with justice” (32:1). Under a just government moral values will be restored (32:1-8). In the second part of Isaiah, besides the good foreign king Cyrus, a ‘servant’ appears (Isa 52:12-53:12), someone who seems beyond humanity both in suffering and in glory. In LXX Isa 52:15 ‘kings’ will shut their mouths, which is remarkable because they are the ones who speak and command while others have to shut their mouths.⁹³ The reason for their silence is that they will see what has not been proclaimed to them about the servant.⁹⁴ While in MT their shock has a negative sense, the Septuagint understands their sudden insight as a salutary discovery.⁹⁵ This understanding is in line with a question that is very much alive in Isa 40-55, as to how the nations will share in the salvation of Israel.⁹⁶ LXX Isa 49:6 also connects this salvation with the servant: “See, I have made you a light of nations, that you may be for salvation to the end of the earth.”⁹⁷ In the next verse, 49:7, kings (βασιλεῖς) and rulers (ἄρχοντες) occur as parallel expressions.⁹⁸ Rulers/kings and nations are placed in relationship to the enigmatic servant.

The appearance of ἄρχοντες in 1 Cor 2:6, 8 is somewhat surprising because 1 Cor 1-4 is a text dealing with social and religious questions. It would have been clear enough when 1 Cor 2:6 had only spoken of the ‘wisdom of this age,’ but the text continues with ‘the wisdom of the ἄρχοντες of this age.’ In 2:8 the ἄρχοντες are responsible for the judicial condemnation of the κύριος. A connection between the crucifixion and the historical rulers in Jerusalem has been made in the book of Acts, where we read,

⁹³ Cf. Bastiaens, *Interpretaties*, 127.

⁹⁴ LXX has, in comparison with MT, the plus περὶ αὐτοῦ, ‘about him’ (NETS: LXX-D). LXX-D adds in the margin as possibility ‘darüber,’ but it is very likely that the servant is meant, because the first half of the verse also says οὕτως θαυμάσονται ἔθνη πολλὰ ἐπ’ αὐτῷ.

⁹⁵ Cf. Beuken, *Jesaja* IIB, 203.

⁹⁶ Cf. Beuken, *Jesaja* IIB, 205.

⁹⁷ MT has “that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.”

⁹⁸ Here also (cf. 52:15) LXX Isaiah adds the pronouns αὐτὸν in “kings will see him” and αὐτῷ in “they will prostrate themselves before him.”

συνήχθησαν ... ἐν τῇ πόλει ταύτῃ ... Ἡρώδης τε καὶ Πόντιος Πιλάτος (4:27).⁹⁹ Paul, however, does not focus on the rulers (2:8) of Israel but on those of the present age (τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου). 1 Cor 1–4 is not concerned with where the cross stood and who the perpetrators were, but with rulers or rule in a wider sense.

It is therefore unjustified to associate the ἄρχοντες in 1 Cor 2:8 with the ἄρχοντες τοῦ λαοῦ τούτου τοῦ ἐν Ἱερουσαλημ in Isa 28:14. We should rather look to another text already quoted implicitly, Isa 19:11–12, where the link between rule and wisdom is strong, just as this is the case in 1 Cor 2:8. The wisdom of the rulers in Isa 19:11 is given the highest value by tracing it to the kings from the beginning (ἐξ ἀρχῆς). In comparison with this text, God’s wisdom in 1 Cor 2:7 outstrips Egypt’s wisdom because God decreed it (προώρισεν) before the ages (πρὸ τῶν αἰώνων). This also illustrates why none of the rulers ‘of this age’ knew of God’s plan. In 1 Cor 2:7 his plan did not originate at the beginning of history but before history. Egypt’s wisdom is ancient but divine wisdom is more than ancient, its origin is beyond human history. In this manner 1 Cor 2:6–8 about a wise plan of God, unknown by rulers, is in line with the taunt expressed in LXX Isa 19:12, “Let them (‘your wise men’) also declare to you (the king) and say what the Lord Sabaoth has planned.”

Judah’s wisdom is hidden (ἐν κρυφῇ, Isa 29:15), kept away from the people (15) and kept away from God (16). The divine announcement “I will hide” in the preceding verse 14 becomes an ironic statement when one hears in the next verse about the leaders’ efforts to hide their plans. They hide their plans but God hides the wisdom with which they have made their plans. Isaiah’s conflict on wisdom aligned with rule is reproduced in the letter to the Corinthians. Just like Isaiah often clusters wisdom, wise men, counselors, kings and rulers, 1 Cor 2:6–8 holds to a mutual dependence between the wisdom of the wise and the powers that be.

The term *psychikos*

1 Cor 2 does not attribute the rejection of the word of the cross to blindness (cf. 3.1 Vision downplayed) but to the absence of the Spirit of God. The expression ψυχικὸς ἄνθρωπος (2:14) denotes a particular kind of person: one who does not have the Spirit of God that is required to be able to understand (2:12) and to discern (2:15) the things of the Spirit (2:14). By saying that these things are foolishness to the ψυχικὸς ἄνθρωπος, 2:14 resumes the verdict ‘foolishness’ of 1:18 and 23, so that in retrospect 2:10–16 attributes the refusal of the word of the cross in 1:18–15 to a lack of the Spirit. The Greeks who do not understand God’s wisdom are ψυχικοὶ ἄνθρωποι.

The origin of the term ψυχικός, which Paul employs only here and in 15:44–46, remains a matter of debate. Its provenance was formerly sought in Gnostic literature, the only writings where ψυχή appears in an unfavourable sense by occupying a position between σάρξ and πνεῦμα. However, these writings are in the first place later than Paul

⁹⁹ Yet even Luke immediately continues this sentence by adding σὺν ἔθνεσιν καὶ λαοῖς Ἰσραὴλ and thereby, just like Paul in 1 Cor 1–4, universalizes the failure of human judgment in the case of Jesus Christ.

and in the second place do not posit a radical opposition between πνευματικός and ψυχικός. It is also very difficult to derive Paul's contrast from Philo's view that during prophetic inspiration ('jenseitiges') πνεῦμα temporarily replaces ('menschliches') νοῦς, so that νοῦς and πνεῦμα would oppose each other. This requires that νοῦς in Philo be associated with ψυχή,¹⁰⁰ an interpretation that ill suits here because 1 Cor 2:16 (supported by LXX Isa 40:13) closely associates νοῦς not with ψυχή but with πνεῦμα.

Much more likely Paul develops this contrast from Scripture.¹⁰¹ The term ψυχή (976 times in the LXX; 752 in the Hebrew canon)¹⁰² was familiar to the reader of the Septuagint as the permanent equivalent of שֶׁפֶט (754 times in OT).¹⁰³ Because in the Septuagint ψυχή often represents שֶׁפֶט, its sense is coloured each time by the contexts of שֶׁפֶט in the original and this contextual influence gives ψυχή a meaning close to שֶׁפֶט in the Hebrew text. In the LXX the term does not introduce a dualistic anthropology but replaces the Hebrew שֶׁפֶט with its various connotations depending on the particular context of Scripture.¹⁰⁴ This means that for Paul ψυχή does not refer in a Greek manner to a part of the human person (as opposed to σῶμα), but like שֶׁפֶט indicates the whole person.¹⁰⁵ Accordingly, its adjective ψυχικός can be used to describe a certain type of person. The addition ἄνθρωπος in 2:14 underlines this. Its opposite, 'the spiritual person' (πνευματικός 2:15), helps to define the kind of person meant with ψυχικός: one who does not have the Spirit of God.

Because Paul uses ψυχικός and πνευματικός as determinations of the whole person, it is very unlikely that he derives these terms from a Greek dualist anthropology, as is held by many.¹⁰⁶ The contrast between πνευματικός and ψυχικός is probably his creation in the service of his argument: only the Spirit of God can reveal and explain the things of God, so that a 'normal' person cannot understand. This person is not called σαρκικός, which sounds negative (cf. 3:3), but ψυχικός, which sounds positive. 1 Cor 1:20 has already argued that even the best (the wise man, the scribe, and the debater) are unable to understand if they are left to their own resources.

The term ψυχικός in itself does not denote insufficiency. Only the arrival of the Spirit creates a new situation in which the insufficiency becomes apparent. Therefore, the antithesis between ψυχικός and πνευματικός should not only be explained from Paul's Jewish background, but also, as Wilckens said, from his "eschatological-christological

¹⁰⁰ This is tried by E. Brandenburger, *Fleisch und Geist. Paulus und die dualistische Weisheit* (Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 1968) 135–6.

¹⁰¹ As far as I know, in the discussion of ψυχικός in 1 Cor 2:14, Scripture (except for Gen 2:7) receives hardly any attention in the commentaries. Fee 116 opts for Scripture but does not explore this avenue.

¹⁰² Source: LEH.

¹⁰³ Source: THAT.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. M. Harl, *La Genèse*, 60: Its meaning in the Septuagint depends on the context and not on its original function in Greek anthropology.

¹⁰⁵ Even σῶμα represents the complete person (from the perspective of bodily life) when Paul says that the Spirit of God dwells in the *body*. (1 Cor 6:19).

¹⁰⁶ *pace* Schrage 264 and many others.

starting point.”¹⁰⁷ Something radically new has taken place in history with the crucifixion of the Messiah (1:17, 23; 2:2, 8; now active and expected as the living Lord, 1:3, 7-9, 17; 4:1, 5) and the arrival of the Spirit (2:4, 10-15). The Spirit is for Paul the eschatological gift that changes the present (2 Cor 1:22).

The intellectual emphasis of LXX Isaiah

The LXX rendering of רוּחַ with νοῦς is exceptional and occurs only in Isa 40:13. The common translational equivalent of רוּחַ is πνεῦμα. Some regard the fact that Paul writes νοῦς instead of πνεῦμα as evidence that he only knew the LXX version of this text, because πνεῦμα seems to them more appropriate to conclude the argument of 2:10-16.¹⁰⁸ This understanding fails to do justice to 1 Cor 2. Paul uses νοῦς and not πνεῦμα because the former better conveys his intentions. A number of considerations point in this direction. First, νοῦς κυρίου recapitulates the call in 1:10 “to be made firm in the same mind (ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ νοί).”¹⁰⁹ The determination of νοῦς as νοῦς κυρίου is of foremost importance. In the church, it is not possible to be of the same mind when one does not have ‘the mind of Christ.’ Νοῦς is not in itself a human faculty which unifies and brings people near to the divine as in Greek philosophy or in Philo.¹¹⁰

Secondly, the term νοῦς is probably used on purpose at the end of a section (2:6-16) that deals with cognition.¹¹¹ ‘Mind’ (νοῦς) refers to both capacity and content.¹¹² “Paul, far from eschewing knowledge, believed that faith could give us knowledge of God’s designs, hence his acceptance of the word *nous*.”¹¹³ This emphasis on knowledge was encouraged by the LXX’s translation of the rare מִי־תִכַּן (‘who has measured’) with τίς ἔγνων, which in its turn was promoted by the emphasis of instruction and counsel in the 40:13-14. As we saw in the second section of this chapter νοῦς κυρίου in LXX Isa 40:13 signifies the thoughts, plans, and intentions of the Lord. The relationship of 1 Cor 2:16 with LXX Isa 40:13 supports the sense of knowledge in νοῦς κυρίου and this carries over into νοῦς Χριστοῦ. Because it possesses the element of knowledge νοῦς Χριστοῦ should not be equated with πνεῦμα τοῦ θεοῦ but it should be seen to include the meaning of σοφία θεοῦ. Νοῦς Χριστοῦ is a wider idea because it also entails a new attitude and a new mindset in Christ, while it implies access to the wisdom of God announced in 2:6-8.

While there is much talk of σοφία and σοφός in 1 Cor 1-4, σύνεσις and συνετός are rare in 1 Cor 1-4. Only cognates of συνήμι occur in a quotation from Isaiah (τὴν

¹⁰⁷ Wilckens, “Zu 1 Kor. 2,1-16,” 534.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. Lindemann 74; Schrage 267, Kammler, *Kreuz*, 233-34; Schnabel 180; Conzelmann 94, even translates: “Wir aber haben den Geist Christi,” 78.

¹⁰⁹ See Chapter 5.1 Divisions.

¹¹⁰ Cf. C.W. Strüder, *Paulus und die Gesinnung Christi* (Leuven: Peeters, 2005) 201, 203.

¹¹¹ See this Chapter, 1.2. Cf. also Voss, *Wort*, 194, who lists the terms γινώσκω (4 times), ἐραυνάω, εἶδον (twice), διδασκός, μωρία, ἀνακρίνω (3 times), and συμμιβάζω.

¹¹² See this Chapter, 1.4.

¹¹³ Hanson, “Midrash,” 79.

σύνεσιν τῶν συνετῶν, 1 Cor 1:19).¹¹⁴ Yet LXX Isaiah employs the verb συνίημι eight times, often in important texts: in the opening prophecy (1:3), in the programmatic statement 6:9-10, in 7:9, 43:10, in 52:13 and 15 on the servant, and in 59:15.¹¹⁵ The absence of συνίημι in 1 Cor 1-4 seems to suggest that what LXX Isaiah does with this verb is irrelevant for 1 Corinthians. Nevertheless, 1 Cor 1-4 and LXX Isaiah have a common interest in πιστεύω, and LXX Isaiah links πιστεύω with συνίημι. To begin with, the verse LXX Isa 7:9 combines πιστεύω and συνίημι and even makes faith or trust a condition for *understanding*, while in MT Isa 7:9 trust is a condition for *being established*. In Isa 43:10 we again find a combination of πιστεύω and συνίημι (ἵνα γνῶτε καὶ πιστεύσητε καὶ συνῆτε ὅτι ἐγὼ εἰμι); here the verbs come close to being synonyms. Furthermore, receiving the prophetic message is called συνίημι in 52:15 and in the next verse (53:1) πιστεύω. It is noteworthy that πιστεύω features altogether four times in LXX Isaiah (7:9; 43:10; 28:16; 53:1) and that in three cases πιστεύω is closely associated with συνίημι.¹¹⁶

When 1 Cor refers to knowing God in 1:21a it disqualifies the world's search for God as a goal that is unachievable and 1:21b redefines this goal of knowing God as salvation. The audience tends to regard wisdom as a prerequisite for salvation, but Paul only knows of faith as a requirement for salvation (1:21b). Wisdom is not the requirement but the result of salvation (1:30). This shows that the structure of the argument in 1 Cor 1-4 agrees with LXX Isa 7:9 on the preliminary role of faith in the area of wisdom and understanding.¹¹⁷ Paul radicalizes LXX Isaiah by his wholesale rejection of the world's wisdom as a way to God. Yet wisdom is not ruled out but returns in connection with the crucified Christ (1:24, 30; 2:7-8; 3:10, 18). In the same way, the book of Isaiah not only rejects the wisdom of the wise but also contains the perspective of wisdom present in a kingly messianic figure (11:2) and in the eschatological community. While the noun συνετός is nearly always used in a negative sense in LXX Isaiah (3:3, 5:21, 19:11, 29:14), an eschatological text restores the term to its proper position as guiding the decisions of the community (οἱ δὲ εὐσεβεῖς συνετὰ ἐβουλεύσαντο, καὶ αὕτη ἡ βουλή μενεῖ, 32:8).

¹¹⁴ 1 Cor 1-4 does not exploit the verb συνίημι, while with its cognate nouns it plays an important role in biblical wisdom writings and in the emphasis on understanding revealed wisdom in Theod Daniel (21 times). The more general verb γινώσκω occurs frequently in 1 Cor 2:6-16 (verses 8 [twice], 11, 14, 16).

¹¹⁵ LXX Isaiah has συνίημι twice without an equivalent in the Hebrew of the MT: in 7:9 and in 59:15 (μετέστησαν τὴν διάνοιαν τοῦ συνιέναι).

¹¹⁶ The fourth text (Isa 28:16) speaks of God laying a precious stone and the Septuagint adds as desired response after this divine action, "and he who believes in him will not be ashamed (καὶ ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ' αὐτῷ οὐ μὴ καταισχυνθῇ), where MT only has "he who trusts will not be in a hurry."

¹¹⁷ The biblical wisdom tradition comes close to this view with its adagium that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

Chapter 11: Wisdom and Leadership (1 Cor 3-4)

1. Structural and Semantic Features of 1 Cor 3-4

1.1 Semantic contrasts (3:1-4)

After τελείοι appeared in 2:6 as a description of those who were able to receive the wisdom of God, the Corinthians are called νήπιοι in 3:1. This contrast may be a reference to religious elitism in Corinth. However, Paul does not pursue this course. His attention in 1 Cor 3:1-4 goes to the contrast between πνευματικοί and σαρκίνοι (v.1) or σαρκικοί (v.3),¹ and to their way of life described as κατὰ ἄνθρωπον περιπατεῖτε (3:3). This verse is the sole place in his letters where the apostle speaks of κατὰ ἄνθρωπον περιπατεῖν.²

The emphasis on ‘man’ or that which is called ‘human’ is also evident in the question at the end of the small unit: οὐκ ἄνθρωποί ἐστε; (3:4). The sentence structure of v.4 gives the question emphasis, as Thiselton points out: “careful use of the contrastive particles μέν and δέ in addition to γάρ add an escalating dimension.” consequently, “the NIV’s *are you not mere men?* and NRSV’s *are you not merely human?* seem anticlimactic.”³ Some have sought to preserve the climax by supposing that, in the imagination of the Corinthians, ἄνθρωπος was the opposite of πνευματικός, so that, in fact, a πνευματικός was no longer ‘human.’ He had reached a stage beyond ordinary human existence.⁴ However, this interpretation remains speculation and depends on the presence of full-fledged Gnostic ideas in Corinth.

Collins points in the right direction, when he explains “merely human” as “not the result of the action of the Spirit of God.”⁵ Living as ‘mere men’ is opposed to living through the Spirit of God. Consequently, the opposition in 1 Cor 3:1-4 pertains not to two kinds of people, ‘man’ (ἄνθρωπος) and ‘man’ (πνευματικός) as in the Gnostic proposal mentioned above, but aims at the contrast between ‘man’ and ‘the Spirit of

¹ A difference in nuance may be intended with the form σαρκίνοι (with the ending -ινος) meaning ‘consisting of / made of σάρξ’ and σαρκικοί signifying ‘determined by σάρξ.’ As verbal adjectives ending on -ικός, πνευματικός and σαρκικός give expression to a relationship of belonging to πνεῦμα and σάρξ (BDF § 113.2).

² The phrase is more or less the equivalent of κατὰ σάρκα περιπατέω (Rom 8:4; 2 Cor 10:2). Cf. κατὰ ἄνθρωπον λέγω (1 Cor 9:8; Rom 3:5; Gal 3:15); Weiss 73.

³ Thiselton 295, but his choice for, “are you not all too human?” (REB), does not seem more successful; likewise Strobel 76: “Gemeint ist: Seid ihr nicht Menschen in aller Problematik und Fragwürdigkeit?”

⁴ E.g. Lietzmann 15; Baumann, *Mitte*, 271; For Barrett 82, this understanding (‘apotheosis’) is a possibility.

⁵ Collins 145.

God.”⁶ The question οὐκ ἄνθρωποι ἐστε; means, “are you not like people who live without (the Spirit of) God?” The opposition between God and man plays a role throughout 1 Cor 1–4, in the areas of wisdom (1:25), of boasting (1:31 and 3:21), of teaching (2:13), and of judgment (4:3–5).

1.2 Extended metaphors (3:5–17)

In 1 Cor 3:9 the text moves from agriculture to architecture. The church is first compared to a field (3:6–9a), then to a building (3:9b–15). However, to translate γεώργιον with field and οἰκοδομή with building makes the metaphors too static. In the Septuagint γεώργιον may not only refer to the piece of land but also to its cultivation. Sir 27:6 speaks of the cultivation of a tree (γεώργιον ξύλου). “Here it is fairly certain that γεώργιον does not mean the ‘tilled land,’ but the ‘husbandry’ or ‘tillage’ that results in the tilled land, and that therefore οἰκοδομή does not mean the edifice, but the building-process which results in an edifice.”⁷ In combination with the subjective genitive θεοῦ and the thought at the beginning of the sentence on the apostles being God’s fellow workers, the best translation is “you are God’s building project.”

Considering the amount of attention it receives, the image of God’s building-project suits the intentions of the author even better than the first. The image contains a number of points of comparison, which make it very suitable: The following aspects of the extended metaphor correspond with aspects of church life:

- The master-builder – the apostle Paul (3:10)
- The foundation – the Messiah (3:11)
- Others who build – leaders and teachers in Corinth (3:12)
- The building-materials – the work of the teachers (3:12)
- The fire – the final test (3:13)
- The wage of the laborers – the final reward of the teachers (3:14)
- The building – the church community (3:16).⁸

1.3 Recapitulation (3:18–23)

Within the pericope 3:18–23 the letter adduces two explicit citations (vv.19–20) to support the statement in 3:19a that “the wisdom of this world is foolishness to God.” This statement is the mirror image to the idea in 1:18–25 that the wisdom of God is foolishness to the world.⁹ At first sight the *peroratio* in 3:18–23 seems to summarize 1:18–25 by

⁶ Cf. Schlatter 128: “Zum Scheltwort wird ‘Mensch’ hier deshalb, weil es im Gegensatz zu Gott gebraucht ist.”

⁷ Robertson-Plummer 59; cf. Lindemann 82 and Schnabel 202: the context makes clear that the work is not finished.

⁸ While in θεοῦ οἰκοδομή (3:9) the verbal idea in the noun οἰκοδομή encourages us to regard θεοῦ as a subjective genitive, θεοῦ in ὁ ναὸς τοῦ θεοῦ is to be taken as a possessive genitive denoting the building itself as a dwelling place that belongs to God.

⁹ This idea is not expressed literally, but by equating the cross and the wisdom of God (1:24, 25) and by claiming that the cross is “foolishness to the nations” (1:23), i.e. to the world.

repeating the same thoughts in 3:18–20. Yet a closer look reveals that a subtle shift has taken place. The main emphasis in 1:18–25 is on the word of the cross and the response it receives in the world. The main emphasis in 3:18–20, however, is on the foolishness of the wisdom of the world in the sight of God. In 1:18–25 it is the gospel that has to defend itself before the bench of the world’s wisdom, in 3:18–20 the world’s wisdom makes its appearance before God. 1 Cor 1:19–20 already entailed a rejection of the wisdom of the world. God’s action does not build on this wisdom but abolishes it. When the segment 3:18–20 returns to the theme of the world’s wisdom it takes the argument a step further by presenting this wisdom as a position that has to be abandoned by those who believe.

The two quotations in 3:19–20 are enclosed within two exhortations: “Let no one deceive himself” (v.18) and “Let nobody boast in men” (v.21). In agreement with the summary character of this *peroratio*, verse 18 also contains an exhortation to those who consider themselves wise. They need to become foolish in the manner of 1:18–25, in order to become wise in the manner of 2:6–16. After this redefinition and reversal of wisdom in 3:18, the text goes on to redefine and reverse the position of the church member towards their leaders in 3:22. The text reverses the slogans in 1:12, “I am of Paul, I am of Apollos, I am of Cephas” (Ἐγὼ μὲν εἰμι Παύλου, Ἐγὼ δὲ Ἀπολλῶ, Ἐγὼ δὲ Κηφᾶ), by saying, “whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas,” “all things are yours.” The latter expression means “you are the slaves of nothing,” “you are free people. The enumeration of men, world, life, death, the present, and the future summarizes all forms of human and cosmic constraint. The secret of this position of freedom is the fact that they belong to Christ. Verse 23 also contains the key to the interpretation of “I am of Christ!” in 1:12. It is very likely that Ἐγὼ δὲ Χριστοῦ is the author’s own exclamation, because it expresses exactly what he thinks, as we hear now in ὑμεῖς δὲ Χριστοῦ.

1 Cor 4 exemplifies what it means to belong to Christ, in portraying the life of Paul. It means that Christ is the master, who entrusts with a task (4:1) and evaluates the performance (4:4).

Being a servant does not make Paul immune to antagonism and hardship. The cross of Christ is not only Paul’s message but also the pattern of his life (4:9–13). The final part (4:14–21) returns to the personal tone of 1:10–17. The author reminds his readers of his relationship with them and makes arrangements for the near future.

1.4 Apostleship and the cross (4:6–13)

In 1 Cor 4:6–13 the author responds to the Corinthians who place large question marks behind his apostolic qualities. What they see surprises them and Paul answers them in his own way. The theatrical bent of the language in 4:9 has led L.L. Welborn to cast Paul in the role of a stage player. In his view, because “μωρός became the generic name for a mimic fool,”¹⁰ Paul meant with “we are fools for Christ,” that he was like a comic actor in the classical theatre who played a lower class fool by means of exaggeration. By speaking as a fool Paul is able to express a truth which otherwise would not have been accepted by

¹⁰ L.L. Welborn, *Paul, the Fool of Christ: A Study of 1 Corinthians 1–4 in the Comic-philosophic Tradition* (London: T&T Clark, 2005) 32–3.

the Corinthians.¹¹ But is this what Paul means? He says “we are fools because of (διό, cf. Ch. 3, note on 1 Cor 4:10) Christ.” This foolishness in the eyes of the world was for Paul the concomitant result of the foolishness of the message of the cross. Paul’s foolishness cannot be explained apart from the cross. Moreover, the foolishness of mime eventually only confirms the wisdom of the world. Despite its initial shock-effect, the cumulative result of mime in the Roman Empire was familiarizing instead of uprooting bad morals.¹² It was only a recycling of rude behaviour from real life into play and from play back into real life. The apostle is not challenging the wisdom of the world by acting like a fool, but by carrying a message that is and remains fundamentally at odds with the value system of the world.

This leads us in a different direction to account for Paul’s self-description. Another way to approach 1 Cor 4:9–13 is to compare it with the picture of the courageous martyrs in 4 Maccabees.¹³ A relevant passage says:

Eleazar contended first; the mother of seven boys entered the fray, and the brothers contended. The tyrant was the antagonist; the world and human society (NRSV: ‘human race’) looked on (ὁ δὲ κόσμος καὶ ὁ τῶν ἀνθρώπων βίος ἐθεώρει). Godliness won the victory and crowned its own athletes. Who did not marvel at the athletes contending for the divine law code? Who were not astonished?... When the tyrant Antiochus saw the courage of their virtue and their endurance under the tortures, he proclaimed to his soldiers that they were an example for their own endurance (ἀνεκήρυξεν ὁ Ἀντίοχος τοῖς στρατιώταις αὐτοῦ εἰς ὑπόδειγμα τὴν ἐκείνων ὑπομονήν) (4 Macc 17:13–16, 23 NETS).

There seems to be a parallel between Paul and the seven brothers at first sight, especially in the language of being a spectacle to the world and to men (θέατρον ἐγενήθημεν τῷ κόσμῳ καὶ ἀγγέλοις καὶ ἀνθρώποις, 1 Cor 4:9). Paul was prepared to endure suffering, just like the Maccabean martyrs were. However, a closer look reveals that the picture of the martyrs conforms to the Stoic ideal of keeping equanimity in one’s ordeals. They are portrayed as examples of virtue and courage. They are honoured and respected by men. But the picture of the apostle and his band is, “we are fools ... we are weak ... we are held in disrepute (ἄτιμοι, v.10), “we have become the rubbish of the world, the dregs of all things” (v.13).

There are two more differences. Paul’s experiences are christologically and eschatologically determined. The brothers suffer in order to stay true to the divine law code, the apostle accept these things “for the sake of Christ.” Paul ends his list of adversities with ‘until now’ (ἕως ἄρτι, v.13). This could also be said by the martyrs. 4 Maccabees combines in a remarkable way Stoic virtue and Jewish eschatology. For Paul, however, the coming of Christ and his Spirit already fills the present, so that he can live

¹¹ Welborn, *Paul*, 248.

¹² Cf. K.-W. Weeber, *Panem et circenses. Massenunterhaltung als Politik im antiken Rom* (Mainz: Von Zabern, 1994) 95.

¹³ Cf. M. Hengel and A.M. Schwemer, *Paul Between Damascus and Antioch* (London, SCM, 1997) 194–5.

with adverse experiences ‘until now.’¹⁴ He knows that this age and the cosmos in its present state are on its way out. “Paul is working within the parameters of the Greco-Roman understanding of the κόσμος and its social ordering. Within that frame of reference, Paul portrays the apostles as occupying the place of social and cosmic outcasts.”¹⁵ The position of the cross in the world is a borderline existence. It cannot be pushed over the edge out of the world, but it does not receive general recognition either. It remains in conflict with the wisdom of the world. The same is true for the apostle of the cross.

1.5 The position of the quotations

Implicit quotations in 1 Cor 3:10-11

1 Cor 3:10 reads

Κατὰ τὴν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ τὴν δοθεῖσάν μοι
ὥς σοφὸς ἀρχιτέκτων / θεμέλιον ἔθηκα,
ἄλλος δὲ ἐποικοδομεῖ. ἕκαστος δὲ βλέπेटω πῶς ἐποικοδομεῖ.

This verse contains in the second line the two elements of ‘wise master builder’ and ‘laying a foundation.’ Both elements belong to the first phase of the work, and refer here to the work of the apostle. The expression ‘wise master-builder’ is unique in the NT and only found once in the Septuagint, in Isa 3:3. The phrase ‘laying a foundation’ may have a connection with Isa 28:16. Except for these two expressions in the centre, the language of 1 Cor 3:10 is very Pauline. The first line has a structural parallel in 2 Cor 13:10 (κατὰ τὴν ἐξουσίαν ἣν ὁ κύριος ἔδωκέν μοι, εἰς οἰκοδομὴν) and a semantic correspondence in 1 Cor 15:10. The words in the last line occur regularly elsewhere in 1 Cor 1-4: ἕκαστος in 1:12, 3:5, 8, 13; 4:5, and the imperative of βλέπω in 1:26 (cf. 8:9; 10:12, 18; 16:10). The verb ἐποικοδομέω occurs four times in 1 Cor 3:10-14 and is absent elsewhere in the Pauline *homologoumena*.

Explicit quotations in 1 Cor 3:19-20

The explicit quotations belong to the pericope (3:18-23, first *peroratio*) that summarizes the argument of 1 Cor 1:10-3:17. The introductory formula “for it is written” (3:19b), reiterated with “and again” (3:20), gives the impression that proof is adduced for the

¹⁴ Cf. Käsemann’s comments on Paul’s statement ἀνάγκη μοι ἐπίκειται (1 Cor 9:16) in “Eine Paulinische Variation des ‘Amor Fati,’” in *Exegetische Versuche und Besinnungen*. Band 2 (Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1968): “Der Stoiker willigt in sein Schicksal ja ein, weil er sich mitten in der Gebundenheit durch den kosmischen Zwang und die Launen des Zufalls seiner Eigentlichkeit und Freiheit im Bereiche des Geistigen getrösten kann. Paulus hat nicht die Autonomie des Geistes gerühmt, sondern die Macht des Evangeliums, die zum Dienst am andern freimacht und lieben lässt, weil man geliebt ward” (238).

¹⁵ E. Adams, *Constructing the World* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2000) 124.

1:19 Ἀπολῶ	τὴν σοφίαν τῶν σοφῶν	
3:19 Ὁ δρασόμενος	τοὺς σοφοὺς ἐν τῇ πανουργίᾳ αὐτῶν	
3:20 Κύριος γινώσκει	τοὺς διαλογισμοὺς τῶν σοφῶν	ὅτι εἰσὶν μάταιοι

The goal of the preceding text is expressed with ὥστε in 3:21. Earlier in the argument purpose-clauses characterized the pericope 1 Cor 1:26–31. Here we meet a purpose-clause once more, also in relation to boasting: “no one should boast in men” (cf. 1:29), because (γάρ) “all things are yours.” The climactic verse 22 forms the positive counterpart of v. 21a, just like 1:30 functions as the positive counterpart in 1:29. As in 1:29–31 this pericope also ends with Christ and God as the final point of reference. The closing words give the right perspective on all things, including church leadership.

Because 1 Cor 4:4 shares a short statement of four words with LXX Job 27:6, we can speak of an implicit quotation. The context in the letter is one of right and rightful judgment. In 4:3–4 the verb ἀνακρίνω occurs three times, as is also the case in 2:14–15. There the examination concerns teaching, here it concerns the apostle. It is clear that a final verdict is denied to men. Man may ‘reckon’ (4:1) but not ‘judge’ (4:3). The use of (ἀνθρῳπίνῃ) ἡμέρα for ‘court’ connects this text with ἡμέρα in 3:13, where the day or the court is the Lord’s. The author continues by saying that he does not even judge himself, followed by a line that appears to be an implicit quotation, “for I am not aware of anything.” The exclusion of this line (4a) would make the text more straightforward and clear:

As it is, however, the text includes a reference to the conviction of innocence. It sounds like Paul is trying to defend himself, but there may be a deeper layer of meaning in v.4aα, when considered from an intertextual perspective.

2. Scripture

2.1 Topoi

There may be a vague border between implicit citation to *topos*, especially when specific expressions or phrases have become more or less stereotype. We call an expression a *topos* when the scale tips towards the general idea and speak of citation when the words are sufficiently specific and can be recognized in a particular pre-text. In the following discussion, the building metaphor and the judgment motif are *topoi*, while the expression ‘wise architect’ and the phrase “I am not aware of anything” will be evaluated as implicit citations.

The building metaphor

The suggested citations in 1 Cor 3:10–11 are part of a pericope that describes the work of those who serve the community as ‘building.’ The metaphor of building the community probably has its roots in Scripture. The verb ἀνοικοδομέω describes part of the task of the prophet Jeremiah, together with the verb ‘to plant’ (καταφυτεύω, Jer 1:10; 24:6). With the term οἰκοδομέω the book of Isaiah touches on the rebuilding of Jerusalem in LXX Isa 44:26 and 28, 45:13, 49:17, and the book refers to the restoration of the people in 58:12, 60:10, 61:4, 65:21–22. Especially LXX Isa 54:12–14 shows affinity with 1 Cor 3: “See, I am preparing for you (ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ ἐτοιμάζω) ... I will place (καὶ θήσω) ... of precious stones (λίθους ἐκλεκτούς) ... and in righteousness you shall be built (οἰκοδομηθήσῃ).”

The combination of the metaphors of planting and building also appears in the original context of some of the verses quoted in 1 Cor 1–4. In the context of Isa 65:17, quoted in 1 Cor 2:9, we read about building and planting (65:21–22), a labor that will not be in vain (65:23). In the context of Isa 44:25 (see Chapter 8.2.2), implicitly quoted in 1 Cor 1:20b, we hear about the rebuilding of Jerusalem together with the laying of the foundation of the temple (44:28).¹⁶ The latter text lacks the motif of planting, but combines the elements of building and temple, just as we find them in 1 Corinthians. 1 Cor 3:9–15 concerns building and 3:16–17 brings up the temple. Semantics and syntax cooperate in the pericope: the metaphors of growing a crop and building a temple suggest that the community progresses and the shift from verbs in the past and present tense in 1 Cor 1–2 to verbs in the future tense in 1 Cor 3–4, confirms this expectation.

The building metaphor in 1 Cor 3:9b–15 converges with the motif of judgment by fire. Testing with fire has in itself no relationship with the motif of building, but Paul melds these two motifs into one in verses 13–15. Even the building materials verse 12 seem to have been chosen with their relevance for the testing by fire in mind. They stand out not for their solidity but for their being fireproof or not.¹⁷

¹⁶ Ἱερουσαλὴμ οἰκοδομηθήσῃ, καὶ τὸν οἶκον τὸν ἅγιόν μου θεμελιώσω.

¹⁷ C.G. Müller, *Gottes Pflanzung – Gottes Bau – Gottes Tempel. Die metaphorische Dimension paulinischer Gemeindeftheologie in 1 Kor 3,5–17* (Fuldäer Studien 5; Frankfurt: Knecht, 1995) 83.

The final test

The topic of judgment occurs several times in 1 Cor 1–4. The introduction already speaks of being “guiltless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1:8), but in 1 Cor 3–4 judgment receives special emphasis. Divisive behaviour in Corinth showed that some thought highly of themselves or of their group. This attitude, no doubt entailed the judging of others, including the apostle. The author responds to this situation by emphasizing that judgment belongs not to people but to the Lord. In 3:12–15 he uses the metaphor of fire that reveals whether one has built with good or bad materials and in 4:3–5 light reveals the intentions of the heart. The time of judgment is called ‘the day’ (3:13, cf. 1:8), or also indicated with “when the Lord comes” (4:5). The overall emphasis in this use of the judgment motif is that God bestows the final recognition (4:5) or reward (3:14).

The image of fire on the day of judgment is found in the Old Testament. Mal 3:2–3 also speaks of a day, of silver and gold, and of the temple in 3:1 (ναόν). Nevertheless, there is insufficient basis to speak of an implicit citation from this passage. Except for the motif and these particular words, Mal 3:2–3 has textually little in common with 1 Cor 3:13–15. Therefore, it is more appropriate to regard judgment by fire as a *topos*. We encounter this *topos* elsewhere, e.g. in several places in the book of Isaiah (9:18–19; 10:16–17; 29:6; 30:27, 33; 33:14; 66:15–16).

In 1 Cor 4:5 we read that the Lord will come and bring the hidden things to light and reveal the intentions of the hearts.

ὁ κύριος, ὃς καὶ φωτίσει τὰ κρυπτὰ τοῦ σκότους
καὶ φανερώσει τὰς βουλὰς τῶν καρδιῶν.

Because of the parallelism and poetic style several commentators assume traditional material in 1 Cor 4:5 even though they are not able to pinpoint a particular source.¹⁸ It can be considered a *topos* of Scripture that God knows the hearts of men.¹⁹ Καρδία as equivalent of Hebrew לֵב often denotes the seat of man’s thought life.²⁰ The term βουλή is not a Pauline word, because 1 Cor 4:5 is the only place in his letters where the word occurs. Meanwhile, LXX Isaiah employs βουλή many times, especially in chapters 28–33. Isa 29:15 is a particularly relevant instance,²¹ because it also contains the word σκότος and the stem κρυπτ-. The specific meaning of σκότος in 1 Cor 4:5 (‘the state of being unknown,’ BDAG, s.v. 2, giving 1 Cor 4:5 as only reference with this meaning) is uncommon but finds a parallel in Is 29:15 (σκότος as figure of secretiveness, GELS, s.v.). This text speaks of those who hide a plan from the Lord, thinking that they escape notice:

¹⁸ Weiss 99; Lietzmann, 19; Conzelmann (Eng. 84); Merklein 297, Mattern, *Verständnis*, 183.

¹⁹ Cf. Schrage 326; 1 Kgs 8:39; Jer 12:3; Paul himself in 1 Thess 2:4.

²⁰ H.W. Wolff, *Anthropology of the Old Testament* (London: SCM, 1974) 46: “In by far the greatest number of cases it is intellectual, rational functions that are ascribed to the heart – i.e., precisely what we ascribe to the head and, more exactly, to the brain.” Cf. Thiselton 343: “In the biblical writings, ‘heart’ includes not only “hidden depths, but mind, emotion, attitude, stance, and wishes that become will and action.”

²¹ The single use of עֲצָוָה in Isa 29:15 MT is amplified by a double use of βουλή in the LXX.

οὐαὶ οἱ ἐν κρυφῇ βουλῇ ποιοῦντες
καὶ ἔσται ἐν σκότει τὰ ἔργα αὐτῶν

Yet, the different order of the words and the different syntax of Is 29:15 and 1 Cor 4:5 make it dubious to speak of an implicit citation. A common sphere of interest and similar language are evident however. The best solution is that we find here a belated echo from the context of Isa 29:14b, the text quoted in 1 Cor 1:19. That the context of Isa 29:14 still plays a role in 1 Cor 4 pleads for the coherence of 1 Cor 1–4.

2.2 Implicit quotations

While *topoi* cannot be traced to one context in particular, implicit citations can be located in a pre-text. In 1 Cor 3–4 two such quotations appear, in 1 Cor 3:10 ‘wise architect’ from LXX Isa 3:3, and in 1 Cor 4:4 “I for myself am not aware of anything” from LXX Job 27:6. Still the fact that retracing is possible does not mean that intertextual relationships exist. We need to evaluate whether some form of exchange takes place between the original and the new context of the quoted phrases. The linguistic connection between the possible implicit quotation 1 Cor 3:11 and Is 28:16 is much less certain and yet on the level of conceptuality a relationship may exist.

Isa 3:3

While the phrase σοφὸς ἀρχιτέκτων in 1 Cor 3:10 comes from Isa 3:3, this is no guarantee that an intertextual relationship exists between the context of LXX Isa 3:3 and that of 1 Cor 3:10. But, whatever the case, the connection with the book of Isaiah remains relevant. 1 Cor 1–4 shares the phrase with Isaiah, and only with Isaiah, a fact that is not without significance, especially when we consider the fact that he incorporates all five Isaianic instances of σοφός in 1 Cor 1–4.²²

LXX Isa 3:1–5

3:1 Ἴδου δὴ ὁ δεσπότης κύριος σαβαωθ
ἀφελεῖ ἀπὸ τῆς Ιουδαίας καὶ ἀπὸ
Ιερουσαλημ ἰσχύοντα καὶ ἰσχύουσιν,
ἰσχὺν ἄρτου καὶ ἰσχὺν ὕδατος,
2 γίγαντα καὶ ἰσχύοντα καὶ ἄνθρωπον
πολεμιστὴν καὶ δικαστὴν καὶ προφήτην
καὶ στοχαστὴν καὶ πρεσβύτερον
3 καὶ πεντηκόνταρχον
καὶ θαυμαστὸν σύμβουλον
καὶ σοφὸν ἀρχιτέκτονα
καὶ συνετὸν ἀκροατὴν·

MT Isa 3:1–5

3:1 כִּי הִנֵּה הָאֲדֹנָי יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת
מְסִיר מִירוּשָׁלַם וּמִיהוּדָה
מִשְׁעָן וּמִשְׁעִנָּה
כָּל מִשְׁעָן־לֶחֶם וְכָל מִשְׁעָן־מַיִם:
2 גִּבּוֹר וְאִישׁ מִלְחָמָה
שׁוֹפֵט וְנָבִיא
וְקַסֵּם וְזָקֵן:
3 שֶׁר־חֲמֻשִּׁים
וְנָשׂוּא פָנִים וְיוֹעֵץ
וְחָכָם חֲרָשִׁים
וְנָבוֹן לִחַשׁ:

²² See Chapter 7.3 Catchwords.

4 καὶ ἐπιστήσω νεανίσκους ἄρχοντας
αὐτῶν, καὶ ἐμπαῖκται κυριεύσουσιν
αὐτῶν.
5 καὶ συμπεσεῖται ὁ λαός,
ἄνθρωπος πρὸς ἄνθρωπον
καὶ ἄνθρωπος πρὸς τὸν πλησίον αὐτοῦ·
προσκόψει τὸ παιδίον πρὸς τὸν
πρεσβύτερον, ὁ ἄτιμος πρὸς τὸν ἔντιμον.

4 וְנָתַתִּי נְעָרִים שָׂרִיָּהֶם
וְתַעֲלוּלִים יִמְשְׁלוּ-בָם:
5 וְנָגַשׁ הָעָם
אִישׁ בְּאִישׁ
וְאִישׁ בְּרֵעֵהוּ
יִרְחָבוּ הַנְּעָר בְּזָקֵן
וְהַנְּקֵלָה בְּנֹכְבָד:

3:1 Behold now the Sovereign, the Lord
Sabaoth, will take away from Judea and
from Ierousalem
a strong man and a strong woman,
strength of bread and strength of water,
2 a mighty one and strong one and soldier,
both judge and prophet,
and diviner and elder
3 both officer of fifty and wonderful
counsellor,
both skilful builder
and intelligent listener.
4 And I will set up youths as their rulers,
and mockers shall be lords of them.
5 And the people will fall together,
man against man,
and a man against his neighbour;
the child will stumble against the elder,
the dishonoured against the honourable.

3:1 For now the Sovereign, the Lord of
hosts,
is taking away from Jerusalem and Judah
support and staff
– all support of bread and all support of
water –
2 warrior and soldier,
judge and prophet,
diviner and elder,
3 captain of fifty and dignitary,
counsellor and skilful magician
and expert enchanter.
4 And I will make boys their princes,
and babes shall rule over them.
5 The people will be oppressed,
everyone by another
and everyone by a neighbour;
the youth will be insolent to the elder,
and the base to the honourable.

With its translation σοφὸν ἀρχιτέκτονα (v.3) the LXX apparently understood חֲכָם חָרָשִׁים as deriving from the verb חָרַשׁ ('to engrave,' thus 'skillful craftsman'). One may think of a craftsmen of secular objects. Particularly smiths were valuable for the production of weapons (cf. 1 Sam 13:19) and therefore taken captive together with the officials in 1 Kgs 24:14, 16.²³ That may be the reason for the inclusion of the expression in MT and LXX in the list of officials to be deposed. Several commentators, however, look to the Aramaic root חָרַשׁ, meaning 'magic,' and translate 'expert enchanter' (NRSV).²⁴

Meanwhile, when we take into consideration the book of Isaiah as a whole, the term חָרָשׁ is nearly always used for a craftsman *of idols* and the topic of the fabrication of idols is very much present in the context of Isa 3:3 (LXX Isa 2:8, 18–20) and in the context of the quotations from Isa 40:13 and 44:25 in 1 Cor 1–4. The term חָרָשׁ occurs

²³ Procksch, *Jesaja I*, 73.

²⁴ Cf. BDB, s.v.; Procksch, *Jesaja I*, 73; Wildberger, *Jesaja*, 117; Watts, *Isaiah 1–33*, 39.

namely in MT Isaiah only in 40:19, 20; 41:7; 44:11, 12, 13, and 45:16.²⁵ In Isa 40:20 the skilled artisan of idols is called **הַרְשָׁהּ חָכָם**, which reminds us of the **חָכָם הַרְשָׁהּ** in Isa 3:3. LXX Isa 40:20 has as equivalent of **הַרְשָׁהּ**, τέκτων and the adverb σοφῶς corresponds with the adjective ‘wise’ (**חָכָם**). We note that in these texts wisdom functions in the area of the production of idols. Could it be that Paul associated the wisdom of the world with the wisdom of idol worship in Isaiah? There seems to be ground for this view when we look at Rom 1:22–23 and yet in 1 Cor 1–4 the evidence is too scanty. His use of Isaiah’s σοφός ἀρχιτέκτων is in itself insufficient.²⁶ Moreover, 1 Cor 3:3 uses the expression in a very positive fashion so that interference of the context of Isa 3:3 would mean that its meaning makes a turn of 180 degrees.

The passage contains other elements of wisdom-language. The quote σοφὸν ἀρχιτέκτονα is preceded by θαυμαστὸν σύμβουλον,²⁷ and followed by συνετὸν ἀκροατήν.²⁸ The noun σύμβουλος and the adjectives σοφός and συνετός connect Judah’s leadership with wisdom as an important support of their authority. When we go beyond Isa 3:3, we see that its context (LXX Isa 3:1–5) deals with leadership under the threat of anarchy.²⁹ A crisis in leadership has already surfaced in the context of earlier quotations: in Isa 29:9–16 and Isa 19:1–15.³⁰ In the latter text we encountered that a man will be at odds with his neighbour (19:2), an idea that is also present in verse 5 of this section. The result of this failed leadership is strife, division and disrespect (v.5). The established leaders in LXX Isa 3 are presented as strong: “a strong man and a strong woman” (v.1), “a mighty one and strong one and soldier” (v.2). This kind of leadership results in conflict: “the people will fall together, man against man, and a man against his neighbour” (Isa 3:5; cf. 19:2).

Are the contexts of Isa 3:3 and 1 Cor 1–4 intertextually related? Such a relationship is only plausible in the form of veiled criticism. In this form the Isaianic emphasis on

²⁵ The only other place is Isa 54:16, here not with the meaning ‘maker of idols’ but ‘smith’ (NRSV). MT Jeremiah has four instances, two of which are found in Jer 10: 3, 9, in the vicinity of Jer 9:23, the text also quoted in 1 Cor 1–4.

²⁶ But one may consider that according to Isa 44–45 people expect from idols salvation, but what they receive is shame (cf. 1 Cor 1:27) and even – while God also chooses in 1 Cor 1:27 – that in Isa 40:20 the idol maker chooses (ἐκλέγεται) wood that will not rot. Isa 40–45 offers its readers a convincing picture of the emptiness of this kind of worship. Paul is not as denigrating towards the wisdom of the world.

²⁷ θαυμαστὸν σύμβουλον (a phrase also found in the Lucianic version of 9:6[5], rendering **פְּלֹא יוֹעֵץ**) represents **פְּנִים נְשׂוּאָה** together with **יֹעֵץ**. The name of the former is derived from the idea that an official receives his status by having his ‘face lifted up’ by the king or other ruler (Duhm, *Jesaja*, 45).

²⁸ The Hebrew term in the place of ἀκροατήν, **שִׁחִי**, refers to whispering, often in the sense of incantation (cf. the charming of serpents in Jer 8:17; Eccl 10:11; cf. Sym ὁμίλις μυστικῇ). This noun, together with **הַרְשָׁהּ** in the Aramaic sense, places Judah’s politics in the sphere of esoteric religious practices, cf. Isa 8:19. The intertwining of magic and politics is attributed to Egypt (Isa 19:3) and Babel (Isa 44:25). Cf. W. McKane, *Prophets and Wise Men* (Naperville: Allenson, 1965) 95–7.

²⁹ Wildberger, *Jesaja*, 116.

³⁰ See chapter 8.2

strong leaders being brought down, would aim at bad leaders in Corinth. Of them it is, indeed, said that they are “puffed up” (4:6, 18, 19). They resisted the weakness of the cross and the weak position of the apostle. Paul says, “we are weak and you are strong” (4:10). Through activating its Isaianic context, the quotation σοφὸς ἀρχιτέκτων may warn bad leaders that they will be removed from their positions. Nevertheless, this view of the function of the quotation remains hypothetical.

Isa 28:16

1 Cor 3:11

θεμέλιον γὰρ ἄλλον οὐδεὶς δύναται
θεῖναι παρὰ τὸν κείμενον,

ὅς ἐστιν Ἰησοῦς Χριστός.

Isa 28:16

διὰ τοῦτο οὕτως λέγει κύριος
Ἴδου ἐγὼ ἐμβαλῶ εἰς τὰ θεμέλια Σιών
λίθον πολυτελὴ ἐκλεκτὸν ἀκρογωνιαῖον
ἔντιμον
εἰς τὰ θεμέλια αὐτῆς,
καὶ ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ’ αὐτῷ οὐ μὴ
καταισχυνηθῇ.

The verbal agreements between Isa 28:16 and 1 Cor 3:11 are sparse. But two connections can be listed. In the first place, the object θεμέλιον in 1 Cor 3:11 should be understood as an abbreviated form of θεμέλιον λίθον, so that Isaiah’s stone (λίθον) may be implied in the letter. In ‘the foundation stone,’ the text combines the stone and the foundations of Isa 28:16. The equation of the stone with Christ is encouraged by the Septuagintal phrase “and who believes in him will never be ashamed.” In the second place, even though the verb ἐμβαλλω of LXX Isa 28:16 does not appear in 1 Cor 3:11, in Rom 9:33 where he explicitly quotes Isa 28:16, Paul uses the verb τίθημι, just like he does here. Apparently, the quotation was present to his mind in this form.

We conclude that the linguistic connections are insufficient to think of an implicit quotation here. In a different respect, however, this text may have the value of a quotation. The metaphor of building was commonly used for the development of the community of believers (cf. Matt 16:18; 1 Pet 2:5; Eph 2:20) and it was natural to connect this metaphor with the central role of the Messiah. Not in the least the clause in the LXX, “who believes in him will not be ashamed,” encouraged the association with Christ in the early church and in Paul (1 Pet 2:6; Rom 9:33). This makes it likely that Isa 28:16 played a role behind the formulation “another foundation no one can lay” in 1 Cor 3:11.

Additional support for the link with Isa 28:16 can be found in the fact that this text begins with the same words as Isa 29:14 does, διὰ τοῦτο (followed by οὕτως λέγει κύριος in 28:16) Ἴδου ἐγὼ ... Both texts announce a new action of God and both may belong to the substructure of 1 Cor 1–4.

Job 27:6

Job does not have the same pretensions as his friends have in the area of wisdom. The only thing he can say is, “I am not conscious within myself of having done anything amiss” (οὐ γὰρ σύνοιδα ἐμαυτῷ ἄτοπα πράξας, LXX 27:6). This saying summarizes

Job's position. It is remarkable that Paul writes οὐδὲν γὰρ ἐμαυτῷ σύνοιδα in 4:4 and we need to consider whether these words can be counted an implicit quotation. Does Paul put himself in the position of Job as one who is accused by his friends?

R.B. Hays has written convincingly that in his letter to the Philippians (1:19) Paul implicitly quotes LXX Job 13:16 with the words, “this wilt turn out for my deliverance” (τοῦτό μοι ἀποβήσεται εἰς σωτηρίαν). We read in the immediate context (LXX 13:18) that Job speaks words applicable to Paul in prison, “Look, I am near my trial; I know that I will be shown to be in the right.”³¹ What Hays puts forward concerning Phil 1:19, also applies to 1 Cor 4:3-4: “By echoing Job's words, Paul ... implicitly transfers to himself some of the significations that traditionally cluster about the figure of Job.”³²

In the following text (1 Cor 4:6-13) the apostle expounds his hardships because of the gospel and the poor reception he receives. This should not lead the Corinthians to the conclusion that the apostle is a spiritual or moral failure. The intertextual evocation in 4:5 of Job's plight, who suffered but was innocent, throws unexpected light on Paul's weakness in 4:9-13.

2.3 The explicit quotations

Job 5:13

The saying quoted in 1 Cor 3:19, “He catches the wise in their craftiness” originally belongs to Job 5:13. This verse is part of a pericope that begins in verse 8 with an introduction of the Lord as the one to whom one should appeal. In the preceding text, Eliphaz declares that man is unable to stand before his maker (4:17-21). Mortals live in houses of clay (4:19) and perish “because they were not able to help themselves (4:20), and “because they did not possess wisdom (4:21).” Even angels are no help, so the text continues (5:1). Therefore, Eliphaz argues, “I will call on the Lord (5:8).”

LXX Job 5:8-13

5:8 οὐ μὴν δὲ ἀλλὰ ἐγὼ δεηθήσομαι
κυρίου, κύριον δὲ τὸν πάντων δεσπότην
ἐπικαλέσομαι
9 τὸν ποιοῦντα μεγάλα καὶ
ἀνεξιχνίαστα, ἔνδοξά τε καὶ ἐξαίσια, ὧν
οὐκ ἔστιν ἀριθμός· 10 τὸν διδόντα ὑετὸν
ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν, ἀποστέλλοντα ὕδωρ ἐπὶ τὴν
ὕπ' οὐρανόν·
11 τὸν ποιοῦντα ταπεινοὺς εἰς ὕψος
καὶ ἀπολωλότας ἐξεγείροντα·
12 διαλλάσσοντα βουλάς πανούργων,

MT Job 5:8-13

5:8 אֵלֹהִים אֲנִי אֶדְרֹשׁ אֱלֹהִים
וְאֱלֹהִים אֲשִׁים דְּבַרְתִּי:
9 עֲשֵׂה גְדֻלּוֹת וְאֵין חֶקֶר
נִפְלְאוֹת עַד־אֵין מִסְפָּר:
10 הַנֶּתֶן מָטָר עַל־פְּנֵי־אֲרֶץ
וְשִׁלַּח מִיָּם עַל־פְּנֵי חוּצוֹת:
11 לָשׁוּם שְׁפָלִים לְמָרוֹם
וּקְדָרִים שְׁגֹבֵי יֶשַׁע:
12 מִפֶּר מַחֲשָׁבוֹת עֲרוּמִּים
וּלְאַת־עֲשִׂינָהּ יְדִיהֶם תּוֹשִׁיחָה:

³¹ ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ ἐγγύς εἰμι τοῦ κρίματός μου, οἶδα ἐγὼ ὅτι δίκαιος ἀναφανοῦμαι. This statement is followed by τίς γάρ ἐστιν ὁ κριθησόμενός μοι (13:19), a thought similar to 1 Cor 4:3 (ἵνα ὑφ' ὑμῶν ἀνακριθῶ).

³² Hays, *Echoes*, 22.

καὶ οὐ μὴ ποιήσουσιν αἱ χεῖρες αὐτῶν
ἀληθές.

13 ὁ καταλαμβάνων σοφοὺς ἐν τῇ
φρονήσει, βουλὴν δὲ πολυπλόκων
ἐξέστησεν

13 לִכְדֹּר חֲכָמִים בְּעָרָם
וַעֲצַת נַפְתָּלִים נִמְהָרָה:

5:8 Nonetheless, I will entreat the Lord,
and I will call on the Lord, the master of
all,

9 who does great and inscrutable things,
things both glorious and extraordinary,
without number

10 who gives rain on the earth,
sending water on what is under heaven,

11 who sets on high those that are lowly
and lifts up those that are in ruin,

12 frustrating the schemes of the crafty –
and their hands shall not produce what is
genuine,

13 he who takes the wise in their
cleverness – and he subverted the
scheming of the wily.

5:8b As for me, I would seek God,
to God I would commit my cause.

9 He does great things and unsearchable,
marvelous things without number.

10 He gives rain on the earth
and sends water on the fields;

11 he sets on high those who are lowly,
and those who mourn are lifted to safety.

12 He frustrates the devices of the crafty,
so that their hands achieve no success.

13 He takes the wise in their own
craftiness;
and the schemes of the wily are brought to
a quick end.

The style of this text is characterized by the repeated use of the participle, both in the Hebrew and in the Greek. This pericope reads like a hymn to God, solemnly called, “the Lord, the master of all” (LXX Job 5:8; cf. Isa 3:1). While participial phrases like “who created heaven and earth,” or “who led Israel out of Egypt” occur regularly in Scripture, the actions of God listed here are less common. The verses 9–13 all share the same construction, including the line 13a that functions as a quotation in 1 Cor 3:19. This participial style is not restricted to this pre-text but is also found in other pre-texts referred to earlier in 1 Cor 1–4.³³

Verse 9 refers to the unfathomable quality of God’s actions in general terms (LXX ἀνεξιχνίαστα, MT אֵין חֶקֶר) and calls them ‘marvellous’ (LXX ἔνδοξά, MT נִפְלְאוֹת). The opening participle τὸν ποιοῦντα and the content of the verse resemble the participial

³³ Verses that can be compared with Job 5:13 are Isa 44:25, quoted implicitly (in 1 Cor 1:20), and Job 12:17, also closely related to 1 Cor 1:20. These texts begin with participles and have as content the uprooting of rulers, counselors, or wise men:

Isa 44:25 ἀποστρέφων φρονίμους εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω καὶ τὴν βουλὴν αὐτῶν μωρεύων

מִפֶּר אֶתֹת בְּדִים וְקִסְמִים יְהוֹלִל מְשִׁיב חֲכָמִים אֲחֹר וְדַעְתָּם יִשְׁכַּל

Job 12:17 διάγων βουλευτὰς αἰχμαλώτους, κριτὰς δὲ γῆς ἐξέστησεν

מֹלִיד יוֹעֲצִים שׁוֹלֵל וְשֹׁפְטִים יְהוֹלֵל

Job 5:13 ὁ καταλαμβάνων σοφοὺς ἐν τῇ φρονήσει,

לִכְדֹּר חֲכָמִים בְּעָרָם.

clause in Jeremiah 9:23 (ποιῶν ἔλεος καὶ κρίμα καὶ δικαιοσύνην ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς). We meet in Job 5:8–11 and Jer 9:23 with the semi-liturgical language of praise.

Verses 12–13 focus on the wise, the crafty and their plans (βουλή, 5:12a, 13b). The idea of counsel occurs in Job 5:13b, a line that is not quoted in 1 Cor 3:19. One may note a similar interest in the immediate context of another quotation. In the book of Isaiah, the quote from 29:14 is instantly followed by talk of a human ‘plan.’³⁴ The same is the case with the part of Isa 40:13 that has not been quoted in 1 Cor 2:16. βουλή or other words of the same root play an important role in the original context of the wisdom quotations from Scripture in 1 Cor 1–4. The lines with βουλή or σύμβουλος that have not been quoted are italicized:

Isa 29:14–15a καὶ ἀπολῶ τὴν σοφίαν τῶν σοφῶν
καὶ τὴν σύνεσιν τῶν συνετῶν κρύψω.
οὐαὶ οἱ βαθέως βουλήν ποιοῦντες
Isa 40:13 τίς ἔγνω νοῦν κυρίου,
καὶ τίς αὐτοῦ σύμβουλος ἐγένετο
Job 5:13 ὁ καταλαμβάνων σοφοὺς ἐν τῇ φρονήσει,
βουλήν δὲ πολυπλόκων ἐξέστησεν

A closer look at the phrasing of the quoted words from Job 5, is needed. The explicit quotation in 1 Cor 3:19 is introduced with “for it is written” and reads thus:

1 Cor 3:19	LXX Job 5:13	MT Job 5:13
Ὁ δρασσόμενος τοὺς	ὁ καταλαμβάνων σοφοὺς	לִכְדּ הַחֲכָמִים
σοφοὺς ἐν τῇ πανουργίᾳ	ἐν τῇ φρονήσει	בְּצַרְפָּם
αὐτῶν		

This quotation differs considerably from Job 5:13 in the Septuagint as we know it, and must have been taken from a different early revision (cf. Theodotion) or present a rendering into Greek on the basis of the Hebrew by Paul himself. Conspicuous is the employment of δρασσόμενος in 1 Cor 3:19. Not only differs the choice of the verb δράσσομαι from the Septuagint’s καταλαμβάνω, δράσσομαι is never used as an equivalent of לִכְדּ in the LXX.³⁵ Neither does the verb occur in any other known Greek translation of Job 5:13. Schaller proposed the use of an early Hebraizing version of LXX Job.³⁶ Yet Paul may have chosen this verb on the basis of the LXX and/or the Hebrew, and his own intentions. While καταλαμβάνω usually describes a larger effort to capture prisoners, to take spoil, to lay hold of something, etc., δράσσομαι in the LXX (8 times) refers to the priest taking a handful of flour (Lev 2:2), or to someone grasping a scorpion with the hand, (Sir 26:7), catching a shadow (Sir 34:2), and scooping ashes (2 Macc 4:41).

³⁴ The atmosphere of hiding plans in a blameworthy manner is present in both Job 5:13 and Isa 29:14.

³⁵ In the LXX καταλαμβάνω (126 times altogether) stands 20 times for לִכְדּ.

³⁶ B. Schaller, “Zum Textcharacter der Hiobzitate im paulinischen Schrifttum,” *ZNW* 71 (1980) 21–6; Koch, *Zeuge*, 71–2.

This use indicates that δράσσομαι is the simpler gesture, more appropriate to describe the natural ease of God's action. In 1 Cor 3:19 'catching the wise' is not a matter of organizing a campaign.

The use of the article τοὺς before σοφούς departs from both LXX and MT. It fits Paul's argument, however, in which 'the wise' are a definite group that symbolizes the wisdom of this age (1:19; cf. the author's change of τῶν ἀνθρώπων into τῶν σοφῶν in the quotation of 3:20). Some argue that the neutral φρονήσις would better suit Paul's intentions,³⁷ but πανουργία (also in 2 Cor 4:2) is consistent with the sly practices of Paul's opponents. They try to keep him away from Corinth (1 Cor 4:18).³⁸ With this quotation the apostle deals indirectly with the scheming practices of certain leading lights.

The only other explicit quotation from Job (41:3) in Paul's letters (in Rom 11:35) also departs significantly from the Septuagint.³⁹ Yet, there can be little doubt that the implicit quotations from 13:6 (in Phil 1:19) and 27:6 (in 1 Cor 4:4) derive from the Septuagint.⁴⁰ Paul probably knew them by heart, considering 1) their catch-phrase character 2) the fact that he quotes them implicitly, and 3) they flow quite naturally into his own composition. This shows that in the case of the book of Job, Paul takes the implicit quotations from the Septuagint and the explicit ones from the Hebrew or from a Hebraizing revision of the Septuagint.

Ψ 93:11

The quotation in 1 Cor 3:20 derives from LXX Psalms 93:11:

Ψ 93:2-3, 8-11

2 ὑψώθητι, ὁ κρίνων τὴν γῆν,
ἀπόδος ἀνταπόδοσιν τοῖς ὑπερηφάνοις.
3 ἕως πότε ἁμαρτωλοί, κύριε,
ἕως πότε ἁμαρτωλοὶ καυχῶνται,
(...)
8 σύνετε δὴ, ἄφρονες ἐν τῷ λαῷ,
καί, μωροί, ποτὲ φρονήσατε.
9 ὁ φυτεύσας τὸ οὖς οὐχὶ ἀκούει,
ἢ ὁ πλάσας τὸν ὀφθαλμὸν οὐ κατανοεῖ;
10 ὁ παιδεύων ἔθνη οὐχὶ ἐλέγξει,
ὁ διδάσκων ἄνθρωπον γινώσιν,
11 κύριος γινώσκει τοὺς διαλογισμοὺς
τῶν ἀνθρώπων ὅτι εἰσὶν μάταιοι.

MT Ps 94:2-3, 8-11

2 הַנֶּשֶׂא שֹׁפֵט הָאָרֶץ
הַשֵּׁב גָּמוּל עַל־גֹּאֲוִים:
3 עַד־מָתִי רְשָׁעִים יִהְיֶה
עַד־מָתִי רְשָׁעִים יַעֲלִזוּ:
(...)
8 בִּינוּ בַעֲרִים בָּעֵם
וּבְסִילִים מָתִי תִשְׁכִּילוּ:
9 הִנֵּטֶע אֶזֶן הָלֹא יִשְׁמַע
אִם־יִצְרַע עֵינַי הָלֹא יִבִּיט:
10 הִיָּסֵר גּוֹיִם הָלֹא יוֹכִיחַ
הַמֶּלֶךְ אָדָם דָּעַת:
11 יִהְיֶה יָדַע מַחֲשַׁבוֹת אָדָם
כִּי־הֵמָּה הֶבֶל:

³⁷ Koch, *Zeuge*, 72; Stanley, *Technique*, 193, n.38.

³⁸ Schlatter 140.

³⁹ Cf. Koch, *Zeuge*, 72-3.

⁴⁰ See above.

2 Be exalted, o you who judge the earth;
 give to the proud what they deserve!
 3 How long shall sinners, o Lord,
 how long shall sinners boast,
 (...)
 8 Do understand, o fools among the
 people,
 and, O stupid ones, think for once!
 9 He who planted the ear, does he not
 hear?
 He who formed the eye, does he not
 perceive?
 10 He who disciplines nations, will he not
 chastise,
 he who teaches man knowledge?
 11 The Lord knows the thoughts of human
 beings, that they are vain.

2 Rise up, o judge of the earth;
 give to the proud what they deserve!
 3 O Lord, how long shall the wicked,
 how long shall the wicked exult?
 (...)
 8 Understand, o dumbest of the people;
 fools, when will you be wise?
 9 He who planted the ear, does he not
 hear?
 He who formed the eye, does he not see?
 10 He who disciplines the nations,
 he who teaches knowledge to humankind,
 does he not chastise?
 11 The Lord knows our thoughts,⁴¹
 that they are but an empty breath.

The Septuagint version of Ψ 93:11 agrees with MT Ps 94:11. The idea expressed in the quotation “The Lord knows the thoughts of men, that they are futile” (Ψ 93:11) can be found in some other Psalms that are critical of the plans and thoughts of a large group or of a ruling segment, e.g. Ψ 2:1-2 (kings) and 13:2 (all). We also read that ‘mankind is futile’ (Ψ 61:10). Comparable statements surface in some prophetic texts.⁴² In the context of Ψ 93 God’s teaching (“he who teaches man knowledge” v.10) and man’s thinking are opposed. The verse quoted in 1 Corinthians is enclosed between two verses on the subject of God teaching and instructing man. Kraus remarks that the statement that “YHWH teaches men” is very exceptional in the context of this psalm, even though verses 8-11 already contain elements of wisdom poetry.⁴³ Verse 12 returns to the subject of verse 10 and thereby accentuates the contrast between the futility of human thinking and God’s teaching. For 1 Cor 1-4 is not only verse 11 relevant, but verses 10 and 12 no less. By evoking the context of the words quoted in 1 Cor 3:20, the *peroratio* of 3:18-23 also recalls 1 Cor 2:6-16 on the Spirit of God who teaches man wisdom. Finally, while the words of the first explicit quotation in Isa 29:14 are immediately followed by a woe-exclamation (οὐαὶ οἱ βαθέως βουλήν ποιοῦντες καὶ οὐ διὰ κυρίου), the words of the last explicit quotation in 1 Cor 1-4 are immediately followed by a beatitude (μακάριος ἄνθρωπος, ὃν ἂν σὺ παιδεύσης, κύριε, καὶ ἐκ τοῦ νόμου σου διδάξης αὐτόν):

10 He who disciplines (παιδεύω) nations, will he not chastise,

⁴¹ NRSV’s ‘our thoughts’ in verse 11 is surprising because there is no manuscript evidence for this rendering in BHS, BHK, or 4QPs^b.

⁴² E.g. MT Jer 17:9 “the heart is devious above all else; it is perverse – who can understand it?” Differently LXX Jer 17:9 “the heart is deep above all else, and so is man, and who shall understand him?”

⁴³ H.-J. Kraus, *Psalmen* II (Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 1960) 655-6.

he who teaches (διδάσκω) man (ἄνθρωπος) knowledge?

11 *The Lord knows the thoughts of human beings, (ἀνθρώπων) that they are vain.*

12 Happy the person (ἄνθρωπος) whom you discipline (παιδεύω), o Lord, and teach (διδάσκω) him out of your law.

The part of the Psalm that precedes the quoted words of verse 11 contains many elements that have already appeared in 1 Cor 1–3. In Ψ 93 the Lord (κύριος) is judge (vv. 1–2) and in 1 Cor 1–4 the Lord (κύριος) also will judge (3:13, 17; 4:5). Even the quotation in the preceding verse 1 Cor 3:19 (from Job 5:13) originates from a context in which the judicial aspect dominates. Eliphaz’ speech recommends in Job 5:8 that one should call on the Lord (LXX), or commit to him one’s cause (MT דבר). The doxology that follows in Job 5:9–16 displays God’s power and justice; so that there is no doubt that he is the one who has the authority to judge.⁴⁴

Ψ 93 expresses deep concern about the confidence of the arrogant (v.2), and of sinners who boast (καυχάομαι, v.3). This context corresponds with the concern of 1 Cor 1–4 about the Corinthians’ behavior, about their arrogance (4:6, 18, 19) and their boasting (1:12, 29; 3:18; 4:7). This congruity between the original and the new context of the quotation intensifies the relationship between 1 Cor 1–4 and Ψ 93. Especially in situations of human pride and boasting the conflict with God’s wisdom becomes acute.

Verses 7–10 that immediately precede the quotation broach some of the same issues that we find in 1 Cor 1–4: the call on fools to become wise in verse Ψ 93:8 (cf. 1 Cor 3:18), and that it is God who teaches man (ὁ διδάσκων ἄνθρωπον γνῶσιν, v.10, cf. 1 Cor 2:10–16). Finally, the crucial overlap between the two contexts consists of Ψ 93:11 and 1 Cor 3:20:

1 Cor 3:20	Ψ 93:11
Κύριος γινώσκει τοὺς διαλογισμοὺς τῶν σοφῶν ὅτι εἰσὶν μάταιοι	11 κύριος γινώσκει τοὺς διαλογισμοὺς τῶν ἀνθρώπων ὅτι εἰσὶν μάταιοι.

The linguistic difference pertains to the persons concerned. It is certainly intentional that Paul replaces in the citation “the thoughts of men” (Ψ 93:11) with “the thoughts of *the wise*.” This agrees with the quotation at the beginning of the argument in 1 Cor 1:19, “I will do away with the wisdom of the wise.” This change is not a restriction, however, because the wise are the representatives *of men* in the area of wisdom. If the wise have no wisdom, then all men are at a loss.

⁴⁴ F. Horst, *Hioḇ* (Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 1968) 64: “Die anschliessende Doxologie soll zeigen, wie man sich dem Verfahren der Gottheit unterwirft und durch das Bekenntnis zur unerforschlichen Allmacht Gottes ihre richterliche Entscheidung als richtig und gültig annimmt.”

3. Reception of Scripture in 1 Cor 3-4

3.1 Discontinuity

Leadership

The cross brings about a new style of leadership, the apostolic style embodied by Paul and his colleagues. Apollos and Peter do not belong to Paul's apostolic band and have their own agenda (1 Cor 16:12; Gal 2:6-10), still, their manner of service has the same quality as Paul's (3:5-6; 3:22; 4:6). They are servants of Christ (4:1) for the benefit of the churches (3:5). The style of the appointed or self-appointed leaders in Corinth, however, is self-important and self-satisfied (4:7-8). Paul's style corresponds with the cross (4:9-13), theirs with the world and the ideal of the wise man.

Isaiah says a good deal about leadership but most of it is a denunciation of current practices. True leadership is painted in messianic colours and remains too vague to put into practice. Isaiah is outspoken on bad leaders and reserved on good rulers. Paul, however, says much about true leadership and little on bad teachers. To encourage good leadership, he has applied to himself and Apollos principles that need to be heard by those who are in the position to build the community. This purpose he indicates in 1 Cor 4:6. Paul's own stance as an apostle of the cross in 4:9-13 is largely discontinuous with Scripture. Because the cross is a radically new event, service in the light of the cross entails the mapping out of a new course.

The following paragraph remains speculation but there are nevertheless indications that 1 Cor 1-4 deals indirectly, through the quotations, with scheming practices of certain people in Corinth. The quotations in 1:19-20 and 31 contain direct reproof against the wise, and may imply a reproach against some self-professed wise men in Corinth. But it may also be the case that other quotations contain indirect reproof. By referring to himself as a 'wise master builder' (found in Isa 3:3) and by speaking of 'laying a foundation' (Isa 28:16), the author activates passages like LXX Isa 3:1-8 and 28:14-22 that speak of leaders being deposed and severely judged. In Isa 28:15 and 29:15 rulers think that they are safe because of their secret alliances. Furthermore, in 1 Cor 3:19 the text recalls Job 5:13 explicitly, "he who catches the wise in their craftiness (πανουργία)," which might refer to sly practices in Corinth.⁴⁵ Those who are puffed up do not only consider themselves wise in a personal religious sense, but no doubt also clever in dominating the members of the community. Finally, 1 Cor 4:5, by saying that God brings dark secrets to light, may implicitly refer to Isa 29:15 ("woe to those who make plans in secret").

⁴⁵ Cf. Schlatter 140: "Es ist das Merkmal der Weisen, dass er Pläne zu entwerfen vermag, die die Verwirklichung seiner Absichten sichern; diese Pläne sind aber nichtig und nie ausführbar. Die Warnung vor ränkesüchtiger Diplomatie, πανουργία, hat Paulus 2 Cor 4:2 wiederholt, uns etwas von der Politik der Gegner erfahren wir schon 1 Cor 4:18, da Paulus ihnen sagt, ihre Absicht sei, ihn gänzlich von der korinthischen Gemeinde auszusperrern."

New vantage point

Another important feature of our text is that the focus, which had been narrowed down to the crucified Christ (unequivocally expressed in 2:2), widens its scope in chapters 3 and 4. The images of growth and building in 3:5–15 already suggest this expansion, but the climactic statement in 3:21b–23 widens the outlook almost beyond all limits. The Corinthians are said to share not only in Paul, Apollos, and Cephas, but also in life and death, in things present and things future. Even the term κόσμος, used for a failed and vanishing constellation in 1:20, makes its reappearance in 3:22. This new perspective has been opened because of the fact that “you belong to Christ and Christ to God” (3:23). This Christ can be no other than the crucified one in chapters 1 and 2, but he is not locked up in the past and guarantees as the risen one (1 Cor 15) a share in all that is and all that is to come (είτε ἐνεστῶτα είτε μέλλοντα, πάντα ὑμῶν, 3:22). 1 Cor 3:18–23 is the *peroratio* which summarizes the preceding argument and draws the ultimate consequences from it. Rhetorically 3:21b–23 is the summit of the section 1 Cor 1–4 as a whole.

3.2 Continuity

Genre and style

Genre transitions take place when quotations from prophetic and poetic literature become part of a Pauline letter that belongs to the deliberative rhetorical genre. Yet there is common ground between prophetic disputations (*Disputationsworte*) and the apostle's argument in 1 Cor 1–4. Both genres seek to win the audience for the author's point of view. Moreover, prophetic discourse may be interspersed with elements of wisdom discourse, such as an appeal to the audience's understanding, a preference for pithy sayings, and the use of irony and rhetorical questions. These literary qualities seem to be particularly present in the contexts of quotations, e.g. in Isa 28:23–29 and Jer 8:8–9,⁴⁶ Isa 40:12–31,⁴⁷ and Ψ 93 (MT Ps 94).⁴⁸ Isaiah marshalls reasons to bolster his argument,⁴⁹ so does Paul by adducing *exempla* in his *argumentatio*. Genre and style of the Hebrew are modified in the process of translation into Greek. The most important book for 1 Cor 1–4, LXX Isaiah is a free translation in Koine Greek, which often implies a different word order and grammatical and contextual changes.⁵⁰ However, the Greek of the Septuagint

⁴⁶ These two texts are examples of *Disputationsworte* (or *Streitgespräche*) according to C. Westermann, *Grundformen prophetischer Rede* (München: Kaiser, 1960) 144–5.

⁴⁷ Cf. M. Dijkstra (“Lawsuit, Debate and Wisdom Discourse in Second Isaiah” in *Studies in the Book of Isaiah* [Leuven: University Press, 1997] 258.

⁴⁸ Kraus, *Psalmen* II, 655: “formgeschichtlich ist 8ff. als Disputationsrede zu verstehen.”

⁴⁹ Cf. Elliger, *Deuterocesaja*, 44–5.

⁵⁰ A. van der Kooij, “Isaiah in the Septuagint,” in *Writing and Reading the Scroll of Isaiah. Studies of an Interpretive Tradition*. Volume II (ed. C.C. Broyles and C.A. Evans; Leiden: Brill, 1997) 518–9.

may modify but does not change the genre of the Hebrew prophetic text or, in the case of Psalms and Job, the genre of the poetic text.⁵¹

Irony is a significant stylistic element shared by several pre-texts and 1 Cor 1–4. It is difficult to overhear the irony when prophets speak about God’s and man’s wisdom. For example, the wisdom of men expresses itself in the production of lifeless images as gods (Isa 40:18–20), man is compared with pottery that protests against the potter (Isa 29:16), and man is asked whether the one who created the ear is unable to hear (Ψ 93:7–9). In 1 Cor 1–4 we also find irony. As in the instances mentioned, the irony in 1 Cor 1:18–31 is of a theological nature, based on the contrast between God and man. The text refers to how, contrary to human wisdom, God saves (1:25), and elects (1:26–29). There is also irony when the hearers are compared to babies unable to digest solid food (3:1–2). The self-satisfied attitude of the Corinthians is struck with the words, “Quite apart from us you have become kings! Indeed I wish that you had become kings, so that we might become kings with you!” (4:8).

Foolish and vain

Μωρία occurs five times in 1 Cor 1–4 and there are no other instances of μωρία within the NT. In the LXX one encounters only two (identical) verses with the term in Jesus Sirach.⁵² However, even though we do not encounter μωρία in LXX Isaiah, we do find μωρός in Isa 19:11,⁵³ as well as μωραίνω, a rare verb.⁵⁴ Its near equivalent in the LXX and in Paul is ματαιόω.⁵⁵ Just like their cognate verbs, μωρός and μάταιος are semantically closely related. In the last citation of the argument on wisdom the διαλογισμοί τῶν σοφῶν are not called μωροί but μάταιοι (1 Cor 3:20). Of course, μάταιοι is part of the quotation from Ψ 93:11, but there may be an added significance to this final word. It corresponds, in the manner of an *inclusio*, with κενόω in 1:17 near the beginning of the *argumentatio*. Paul’s concern was that the cross of Christ should not be

⁵¹ Even though one needs to consider that with regard to hymns as in the Psalms, the LXX rendering does not result in lyrical poetry but in ‘elevated prose’ (F. Siegert, *Zwischen Hebräischer Bibel und Altem Testament. Eine Einführung in die Septuaginta* (Münster: Lit, 2001) 185.

⁵² 20:31 and 41:15, κρείσσων ἄνθρωπος ἀποκρύπτων τὴν μωρίαν αὐτοῦ ἢ ἄνθρωπος ἀποκρύπτων τὴν σοφίαν αὐτοῦ.

⁵³ In Isa 19:11 LXX: καὶ μωροὶ ἔσονται οἱ ἄρχοντες Τάνεως and in 19:12: ποῦ εἰσιν νῦν οἱ σοφοί σου;

⁵⁴ The only other place in Paul besides 1 Cor 1:20 is the related expression φάσκοντες εἶναι σοφοὶ ἐμωράνθησαν in Rom 1:22. In the two other NT references the subject of the passive verb is ‘salt’ and its meaning is ‘become tasteless’ (Matt 5:13; Luke 14:34). The LXX has the verb μωραίνω in 2 Kgdms 24:10, Isa 19:11, and Jer 10:14. In Jer 28:17, a doublet of Jer 10:14, we read instead of ἐμωράνθη (Jer 10:14), ἐματαιώθη πᾶς ἄνθρωπος ἀπὸ γνώσεως (Jer 28:17).

⁵⁵ The verb ματαιόω occurs 7 times in the Septuagint and has the meaning ‘make foolish’ in 1 Kgdms 13:13; 26:21 and 1 Chr 21:8. In Romans 1:21–22 the verb ματαιόω has nearly the same semantic value as μωραίνω, as appears from the parallel statements in wisdom-language, ἐματαιώθησαν ἐν τοῖς διαλογισμοῖς αὐτῶν and φάσκοντες εἶναι σοφοὶ ἐμωράνθησαν.

made void (ἵνα μὴ κενωθῇ).⁵⁶ When the last quotation on the subject of wisdom says that the considerations of the wise are vain, this μάταιοι reminds the reader of the concern with which the argument began.

Flesh and spirit

The opposition between flesh and Spirit is familiar from other Pauline letters. Paul applies it in the area of ethics,⁵⁷ but he also makes the Spirit the criterion for true faith.⁵⁸ Yet, in 3:1 the ‘spiritual’ are those who are able to receive a deeper understanding, who can be taught ‘spiritual things,’ the things outlined in 2:10–16. The text contrasts πνευματικός with σαρκίνος (3:1), a term that points to man in his weakness as a creature of flesh and blood. The closely related σαρκικός may have the same meaning of creaturely weakness but may also refer to moral weakness. Two different aspects of the flesh and being fleshly appear in 3:1–4.

The first aspect indicates that a person is consigned to merely human abilities (2 Cor 1:12 and 10:4), just like ‘all flesh’ (1:29) refers to humanity in its own strength and wisdom. In this sense σαρκικοί ἐστε denotes a lack of ability. The second aspect goes a step further and makes σαρκικοί ἐστε and σὰρξ the reason for strife, and the source of moral failure.⁵⁹ These two aspects of σαρκικός are not clearly kept apart in 3:1–4. Paul does not distinguish between human creaturely weakness and moral failure. He is not interested in attributing guilt to those involved in strife. The great failure he is concerned about is that they are not πνευματικοί, that they are not led by the Spirit. This consigns them to the flesh, whichever way this expresses itself in their lives. The flesh as it is does not exist in a morally neutral state, but is always involved to some extent in the present sinful human condition.

In 3:3 ‘walk according to man’ appears on the scene as the parallel statement of to ‘be fleshly,’ and verse 4 ends with the question, “are you not men?” When one takes ‘men’ here in its common meaning, the question would be nonsense. It only makes sense when οὐκ ἄνθρωποι ἐστε is another way of saying σαρκικοί ἐστε. The real issue is the opposition between flesh and Spirit, which turns out to be the same here as the opposition between man and God. The dividing line between flesh and spirit is not placed within man but between man and God. This is quite different from the opposition within a person between body and spirit in Greek thought. 1 Cor 3:1–4 sees flesh and man on the one side and spirit and God on the other side. Now the terms ‘flesh’ and

⁵⁶ For Paul μάταιος and κένος are more or less synonyms. In 1 Cor 15:14 he argues that if Christ is not raised, we have an empty (κένος) message and you have an empty (κένος) faith. In verse 17 he again says “If Christ has not been raised, your faith is empty (μάταιος).”

⁵⁷ Cf. “what the flesh desires is opposed to the spirit” (ἡ γὰρ σὰρξ ἐπιθυμεῖ κατὰ τοῦ πνεύματος, Gal 5:17, 16–25), and “we who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit” (ἡμῖν τοῖς μὴ κατὰ σάρκα περιπατοῦσιν ἀλλὰ κατὰ πνεῦμα, Rom 8:4).

⁵⁸ Cf. “having started with the Spirit, are you now ending with the flesh?” (ἐναρξάμενοι πνεύματι νῦν σαρκὶ ἐπιτελεῖσθε, Gal 3:3)

⁵⁹ Likewise, in Gal 5:20 jealousy and strife belong to the ἔργα τῆς σαρκός.

‘man’ in 1 Cor 3:1–4 receive sharp contours against the background of Isa 31:1–3 with which it appears to be intertextually related:

LXX Isa 31:3a

– an Egyptian, a man and not God –
the flesh of horses and there is no help.

MT Isa 31:3a

The Egyptians are human, and not God;
their horses are flesh, and not spirit.

The parallellism of ‘man’ in the first line and ‘flesh’ in the second (LXX and MT) corresponds with the synonymy of both terms in 1 Cor 3:1–4. The MT also contains the contrast between flesh and spirit that we find in 1 Cor 3:1.

Conclusions Part III

Chapter 7

1. Each of the five texts with the word σοφός in Septuagint-Isaiah (3:3, 19:11, 12, 29:14, 31:2) turns up in some way in 1 Cor 1-4. The texts with σοφός in LXX Isaiah contribute to 1 Cor 1-4 in the following way:
 - The quotation in 1 Cor 1:19 gives Isa 29:14 on ἡ σοφία τῶν σοφῶν a key position in the argument of 1 Cor 1-4. It is the starting point for defining the relation between the word of the cross and the wisdom of the world.
 - 1 Cor 1:20 resumes the argument found in Isa 19:11-12, where it is asked “where are your σοφοί?” (19:12) and where it is said that the counsel of the σοφοὶ σύμβουλοι will be made foolish (19:11, likewise Isa 44:25 with LXX φρόνιμοι, MT חֲכָמִים).
 - Isa 31:2 is a rare prophetic text in which ‘wise’ is applied to God (καὶ αὐτὸς σοφός). As the confrontation with human wisdom in 1 Cor 1:18-2:5 takes place in connection with Isa 29:14, so the discussion on the wisdom of God in 1 Cor 2:6-16 takes place in connection with Isa 31:2. 1 Cor 1-2 follows the development of Isa 29-31.
 - The expression σοφός ἀρχιτέκτων (Isa 3:3) is a remarkable quotation in 1 Cor 3:10 because it is unique in the Septuagint and in the New Testament. It is uncertain whether the original context of Isa 3:3 has a function in 1 Cor 3. Apparently the expression itself was sufficient reason for its incorporation in 1 Cor 3. This suggests that 1 Cor 1-4 systematically includes all LXX Isaiah instances of σοφός.

Chapter 8

2. The event of the cross brings salvation (1:18), consisting of wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption that have become a present reality in Christ (1:30). This is the main effect of the cross.
3. The second effect of the cross is the perishing of the wisdom of the wise (1:19). The cross exposes the failure of the wisdom of the wise. This wisdom lacks the ability to discern the meaning of Christ’s death. Even though the Septuagint is less clear on this than the MT,¹ the following parallels can be observed between 1 Cor 1:18-19 and Isa 29:14a-b. 1 Cor 1:18 and Isa 29:14a speak of an action of God, 1 Cor 1:19 and Isa 29:14b of its effect on men. In addition, 1 Cor 1:20 and Isa 19:12 are both texts that challenge wise men to explain what God does.
4. 1 Cor 1 does not employ the language of fulfilment, but the idea is manifest in the way the citation in 1 Cor 1:19 is presented. The citation is read as a prophetic text that has now been fulfilled. This is made clear in 1 Cor 1:20, where the future tense of Isa 19:11 and Isa 44:25 has become a past tense: “God *has made foolish* the wisdom of the world.”

¹ Especially because of the syntax of LXX Isa 29:14 and its use of μετατίθημι for פִּלָּא (see the discussion in Chapter 8.2.1 on Isa 29:14).

5. The rhetorical situation of Paul's letter differs decisively from the rhetorical situation of Isaiah's text. The main reason for this shift is the eschatological framework of 1 Cor 1-4. The letter says that the recipients are the ones "on whom the end of the ages has come" (10:11). The first nine verses of the letter already firmly set the tone. They manifest a strong sense of fulfilment through their frequent use of the name 'Christ Jesus' ('Messiah Jesus') or 'Jesus Christ.' They signal: the Messiah has come.
6. However, the coming of the Messiah does not mean the final fulfilment of prophetic Scripture. The 'day of the Lord' – now called 'the day of our Lord Jesus Christ' (1:8) – and his revelation (1:7) are still expected. 1 Cor 1-4 evidences a two-phase eschatology because for Paul the expectations have been partially fulfilled. The Messiah has come, the Spirit has been given to God's people, and Gentiles share in God's calling, but the apostle still awaits the final judgment (3:13; 4:4), the glory that is to come (2:7), and the perfect reign of God (4:8). The focus of 1:19 is not only on the past event of the cross but also on the ongoing proclamation of the word of the cross. A confrontation takes place between the word of the cross and the wisdom of the wise wherever the word comes. This emphasis gives a dynamic and unfinished perspective to 1 Cor 1:18-25.
7. How does this relate to Paul's reading of Isaiah? Isa 29 seems to present two phases in succession. In Isaiah 29 incomprehension (verses 9-16) is followed by understanding (verses 17-24). The text suggests a point of transition in time from judgment in verses 9-16 to salvation in 17-24. The transition is marked by the introductory statements 'yet a little while' in v.17 and 'on that day' in v.18. In Isa 29 the rejection of the prophet's message is largely a matter of the present in verses 9-16, while acceptance belongs to the future in verses 17-24. 1 Cor 1:18-25, however, presents both responses as part of the present. Rejection and acceptance occur simultaneously.

Chapter 9

8. What 1 Cor 1:27 calls 'shame' is, as we find it in Isaiah, eschatological in nature and the opposite of salvation. It is not what society considers 'shame.' That the wise and the powerful will be put to shame, does not mean that they will lose their esteem in society. The 'wise according to the flesh' remain wise in the eyes of the world. Likewise, the 'weak' and 'foolish' readers remain what they were in the eyes of the world. Their election does not take away their experience of social or cultural shame.
9. Shaming plays a role in the original context of the two explicit quotations in 1 Cor 1. On the positive side, Isa 29:22-23 says that a renewed and true worship will preserve the people from shame: "Jacob shall not be ashamed now" (LXX; cf. LXX Isa 28:16, stating that faith in the foundation stone will save from shame). On the negative side, LXX Isa 30:3 says that trust in a deceptive helper will result in shame: "the shelter of Pharaoh shall become a shame for you." Additionally, the combination in 1 Cor 1:27 of shame and wise men finds a precedent in Jer 8:9, a text that belongs to the wider context of the explicit quotation from Jer 9:23 and states that "the wise will be ashamed."

10. The quotation in 1 Cor 1:31 finds its origin not in 1 Kgdms 2 but in Jer 9:22-23 because Jeremiah's word choice of σοφός and σοφία recurs in 1 Cor 1:26-27, and the divine work of mercy, judgment and righteousness in Jer 9 corresponds with God's actions in 1 Cor 1:30. 1 Kgdms 2:10 has φρόνιμος and φρόνησις, and attributes the execution of justice and righteousness to man.
11. In Jer 9:23 boasting in the Lord means rejoicing in God's faithfulness to the covenant but in 1 Cor 1:31 it means boasting in the crucified Messiah. 1 Cor 1:30 closely connects him with the gifts of salvation, as the one "who has become for us wisdom, righteousness etc."
12. The rhetorical strategy of 1 Cor 1-4 is not to eradicate boasting but to redirect boasting from false supports towards its true ground, from boasting in men (1 Cor 1:11-12; 4:19 λόγος τῶν πεφυσιωμένων), to boasting in the Lord (1:30 and 3:22-23). In 1:31 boasting in Christ is no longer a matter of appropriate speech only, but becomes doxology.

Chapter 10

13. Like Daniel, Paul uses the term μυστήριον for eschatological events, such as the resurrection (1 Cor 15:51) and the salvation of Israel (Rom 11:25). Therefore, when the apostle also uses μυστήριον for the message of salvation through the cross in 1 Cor 2:1 and 7, there needs to be little doubt that in his eyes the cross of Christ is an eschatological event. In 1 Cor 1-4 the cross has brought near the kingdom of God (1 Cor 4:20), it has broken the power of the rulers of this age (1 Cor 2:6, 8; 1:27-28), and exhibited the wisdom of the world as foolishness (1:20).
14. The alliance Isaiah observes between wisdom and rule is reproduced in the letter to the Corinthians. Isaiah clusters wisdom, wise men, counselors, kings and rulers, 1 Cor 2:6-8 links the wisdom of the wise with the power of rulers.
15. 1 Cor 2:9 has the order eye-ear, but Isa 64:3 first has hearing and then seeing. In Isa 6:10b, however, we find the same order of the three elements eye(s)-ear(s)-heart as in 1 Cor 2:9 (μήποτε ἴδωσιν τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς, καὶ τοῖς ὠσὶν ἀκούσωσιν καὶ τῇ καρδίᾳ συνῶσιν). This indicates that 1 Cor 2:9 reacts to and overturns the negative programmatic prophecy of Isa 6:10.
16. To have 'eyes that see' is an important expression, even a key expression in the book of Isaiah and a characteristic feature of salvation. In Isa 6:5 the prophet exclaims in his inaugural vision: "My eyes have seen the King." The prophet's inaugural vision was a proleptic view of what the remnant of the people would see in the future. In 33:17 the people are promised, "your eyes (LXX: 'you') will see the King in his beauty," and "your eyes will see Jerusalem" (33:20 MT and LXX). The restoration of vision and the return of hearing are heard like a refrain throughout Isaiah, particularly in chapters 28-33 (29:18; 30:20; 32:3; 33:17, 20) and in LXX Isa 40:5 the vision becomes universal with "all flesh shall see the salvation of God" (cf. 52:8, 10).
17. In spite of this, 1 Cor 2 does not exploit Isaiah's language on vision when dealing with revelation. It even does the opposite. By describing Jesus Christ as the Lord of glory when he was condemned to the cross (2:8), Paul underscores that God's glory is hidden in the present age. The way the apostle depicts the kind of life he lives in the light of the cross in 1 Cor 2:3 and 4:6-13 agrees with the absence of

- glory in 1 Cor 2. This absence or hidden presence indicates a significant difference between pre-text and receptor text in the way they describe the time of salvation.
18. The pattern of revelation-interpretation in Daniel lingers in the background of 1 Cor 2:6-16. In Daniel the words *μυστήριον* and *ἀποκαλύπτω* belong to the first phase of revelation, *συγκρίνω* belongs to the second phase of transmitting understanding. The same order exists in 1 Cor 2:6-16. For revelation the Spirit was necessary (2:10-12), but this is no less so in the case of understanding through *συγκρίνω*.
 19. The theological argument in 1 Cor 2:13-15 employs judicial language and this language implies a conflict regarding the legitimacy of two forms of discourse, one that measures with the standards 'of this age,' and another which receives its authority from the Spirit of God. The verb *ἀνακρίνω* relates to this question of legitimacy and the right to speak of the things of God.
 20. In 1 Cor 2 *ψυχή* does not refer in a Greek manner to a part of the human person (as in Greek thought opposed to *σῶμα*), but like *נַפֿשׁ* indicates the whole person. Accordingly, its adjective *ψυχικός* describes a certain type of person. The term *ψυχικός* in 2:14 is defined by its opposite, 'the spiritual person' (*πνευματικός*, 2:15), and therefore signifies a person who does not have the Spirit of God.
 21. The term *ψυχικός* in itself does not denote insufficiency. Only the arrival of the Spirit creates a new situation in which the insufficiency becomes apparent. Therefore, the antithesis between *ψυχικός* and *πνευματικός* should not only be explained from Paul's Jewish background, but also from his new eschatological-christological starting point.
 22. *Νοῦς Χριστοῦ* represents a way of thinking and behaving determined by Christ and is adequately expressed with 'the mind of Christ,' because 'mind' denotes both the faculty of thought and the thoughts or inclinations. The term *νοῦς* is not simply a repetition of the language of the quotation in 1 Cor 2:16a. Paul could have replaced 'mind' with 'spirit' (cf. *רוּחַ* in MT Isa 40:13) in his own clause (v.16b), just like he replaced 'know' with 'have,' and 'Lord' with 'Christ.' But we argued that he employed *νοῦς* on purpose, to indicate that the believing community is not only given the Spirit of God but also a new ability to think and a knowledge of God's designs. Finally, *νοῦς Χριστοῦ* in 1 Cor 2:16 recalls and specifies the exhortation in 1:10 "to be made firm in the same mind (*ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ νοί*)."

Chapter 11

23. The emphasis in 1:18-25 is on the word of the cross and its foolishness in the eyes of the world but the emphasis in 3:18-20 is on the foolishness of the wisdom of the world in the sight of God. In 1:18-25 the world's wisdom judges the gospel, in 3:18-20 God summons the wisdom of the world. The prosecutor and the defendant have swapped position. Almost unnoticeably during the course of the argument the perspective has changed.
24. The wording of the quotations in 1 Cor 3:19-20 focuses the reader's attention on 'the wise.' God is subject and the wise or their thoughts are object. That God considers their wisdom shrewd (3:19) and vain (3:20) is not as forceful as what the quotations in 1 Cor 1:19-20 did say about the wisdom of the wise. Yet their

gnomic character, expressed with the present participle and the present finite verb, has a wide scope. It takes away the impression that God's opposition to the wisdom of the wise is incidental and underlines that the discrepancy between God and man in the area of understanding is permanent.

25. The two quotations from Job and Psalms serve to confirm the preceding argument in 1 Cor 1:18–3:17. They show that witnesses from two divisions of the Jewish Scriptures, i.e. the Prophets (in 1 Cor 1–2) and the Writings (in 1 Cor 3), agree regarding God's estimation of the wisdom of the wise.
26. In the pre-text, the words of the first explicit quotation (1 Cor 1:19) are followed by a woe-exclamation (οὐαὶ ..., Isa 29:15), but the words of the last explicit quotation (1 Cor 3:20) are followed by a beatitude (μακάριος ἄνθρωπος ὃν ἂν σὺ παιδεύσης, κύριε, καὶ ἐκ τοῦ νόμου σου διδάξης αὐτόν, Ψ 93:11). This context in Scripture suggests a new beginning and a new readiness to learn (cf. Ψ 1:1), which is also the intention expressed in the subsequent text (1 Cor 3:21–23; 4:14–21). The Scripture echo at the beginning is one of condemnation, the echo at the end is one of blessing for those who are willing to receive correction.
27. The cross brings about a new style of leadership, the apostolic style embodied by Paul and his colleagues. Apollos and Peter do not belong to Paul's apostolic band and have their own agenda (1 Cor 16:12; Gal 2:6–10), still, their manner of service has the same quality as Paul's (3:5–6; 3:22; 4:6). They are servants of Christ (4:1) for the benefit of the churches (3:5). The style of the appointed or self-appointed leaders in Corinth, however, is self-important and self-satisfied (4:7–8). Paul's style corresponds with the cross (4:9–13), theirs with the world and the ideal of the wise man.

Chapter 12: Concluding Remarks

1. *The Role of Scripture*

It is said that Paul's apocalyptic word of the cross "depends on nothing that came before," and "forces a disjuncture with prior salvation schemas and, ultimately, an end to the accustomed ways of knowing God."¹ It has also been said that the word of the cross creates its own semantics.² True, for Jewish religious sensibilities the message of the crucified Messiah is a near break with the past and deeply disturbing, nothing less than a shock. But, instead of cutting the umbilical cord, this shock is precisely the reason why the apostle plunges into Scripture. A poet's words, "send back the writer howling to his art," apply to Saul/Paul. When the eyes of this Pharisee were opened for Jesus Christ, he was bound to return to Scripture and to read the texts with new eyes. He needed to come to terms with the scandal of the cross. The crucified Messiah was undoubtedly the issue for discussion in the Diaspora synagogues when Paul first arrived with the gospel (cf. 1 Cor 1:6; 2:2).

In 1 Cor 1-4 however, the ground has shifted.³ It is no longer the scandal of the cross where the battle rages, but now it is the *foolishness* of the cross. Nevertheless, again it is the cross. The death of Christ matters so much to Paul because it is the only way of salvation. In Corinth wisdom – in the Jewish garb of the law or in the Greek garb of spiritual knowledge – apparently had risen in esteem as an alternative or a supplement to the cross. 1 Cor 1-4 is the result of the apostle's search to come to terms with the conflict between the cross and a concept of wisdom that charmed the Corinthians. Faith in Christ makes Paul return to Scripture and there he finds confirmation that the cross is not a random happening but the central revelation of God's wisdom. For Paul to preach Christ crucified is not the repetition of a formula but a proclamation of the cross in its context, in the context of Scripture.

Evaluating the intertextual approach

This book started with the assumption that the intertextual approach will increase our understanding of 1 Cor 1-4. At the outset, intertextuality was defined as a) the phenomenon that one text has absorbed elements of other texts and b) the approach that

¹ A.R. Brown, *The Cross and Human Transformation. Paul's Apocalyptic Word in 1 Corinthians* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995) 95.

² H. Merklein, "Die Weisheit Gottes und die Weisheit der Welt (1 Kor 1:21)," in *Studien zu Jesus und Paulus* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1987) 377; Merklein 173. On the next page in his commentary Merklein admits, however, that Paul's paradoxical semantics are not completely new but related to a certain wisdom tradition in Scripture (Merklein 174).

³ May this also be the reason for the surprising absence of quotations from Isa 53 here and elsewhere in his letters (beyond 53:1 in Rom 10:16)? Does Paul not need or want to enter that discussion again?

studies this phenomenon. Chapter 2.4 offered an outline of this approach based on the work of W. Weren. Now, after the experience gained in Part III, it is time to take stock. To begin with, in the following areas the approach has been very useful in tracing the role of Scripture in 1 Cor 1–4:

- The approach recognizes the specific value of the *quotations*. Rather than differentiate between quotations and allusions, we did distinguish between explicit and implicit quotations, because any dividing line is fluid and implicit quotations are as indispensable in the complex fabric of the relationship with Scripture as explicit ones. Expressed in terms of a play, the explicit quotations are the leading actors, while the implicit ones have supporting roles. Yet it can be hard to tell whether a part leads or supports and a supporting role can be essential or decisive for the plot.
- The *original context* of the quotation nearly always proves to be relevant and influential in the new context.
- Quotations in the receptor text frequently reveal the presence of mutual *relationships between different pre-texts*. E.g. the pericopes from which the quotations in 1 Cor 1:19–20 originate, that is Isa 29:9–16, 19:11–14 and 44:24–28, are mutually related within the book of Isaiah.
- The pre-text and the new text relate to each other in a *dynamic* manner. For example, the receptor text may repeat a question (“where are now your wise men?” Is 19:12) in the new context of the cross in ‘this age,’ so that the question receives an eschatological and universal significance (cf. Chapter 8.2.2). The receptor text may also answer a question (“who has known the mind of the Lord?”) affirmatively, while the pre-text did not have the faintest doubt that the answer was ‘nobody!’ (cf. Chapter 10.3.1 on Isa 40:13, and 10.2.1 on Isa 53:1a).
- The *transformation* of quotations takes place all the time, but it happens in varying degrees and in various ways, e.g. by expanding their meaning (e.g. 1 Cor 19, 20) or in the form of concentration (e.g. 1 Cor 1:31; 3:19, 20).
- Syntactic (antithesis, e.g. Chapter 9.3.2), thematic (the development from wisdom of man to wisdom of God, from revelation to interpretation, and from the loss of glory to the revelation of glory; see Chapter 10.2.1), and rhetorical *structures* (boasting becomes doxology, Chapter 9.3.2) of pre-texts become substructures in the receptor text.
- Intertextuality entails and reveals elements of *continuity and discontinuity* between source text and receptor text (see the third sections of Chapters 8–11).

In a few other respects the method we set out with needs to be modified or expanded:

- Several notions or phrases in 1 Cor 1–4 are nearly certain to derive from Scripture but cannot be retraced to particular passages, so that it was necessary to introduce the literary term *topos* (see Chapter 7.2). Because of the thematic quality they have, *topoi* often contribute to the macrostructure of the text’s relationship with Scripture (see Chapters 9.2.1 and 11.2.1).
- The idea of *textual unit* as designation for the context of a quotation in the pre-text has proven to be unsatisfactory. Intertextual relationships between receptor text and pre-texts do not confine themselves to particular clearly definable textual

segments. In varying degrees verses or lines from a wider context are linked with the words that have become a quotation. Isolating a textual unit from its larger context may be just as wrong as isolating a quotation from its context.

- It is useful to pay attention to the *position* of the implicit and explicit quotations in the receptor text, so that the transitions between the quotation and the receptor text become visible (see the first sections of Chapters 8–11). These transitions may pertain to genre, style, syntax, and meaning. H. Plett called these transitions, ‘quotation thresholds’ (Chapter 7.3). We saw that an explicit quotation like 1 Cor 1:31 is thoroughly integrated, but 1 Cor 2:9 retains the aura of intruder. 1 Cor 1:19 has a bit of both, which increases the dialectical tension of resistance and integration. The position of the quotation in the receptor text contributes significantly to its intertextual effect.

Context

This paragraph singles out the most important modification of the intertextual approach formulated in the beginning. It has become clear that the extent of the context in the source text cannot be restricted to a pericope. Often larger portions of Scripture come into play, so that the relevant context may include several chapters (e.g. Isa 28–33, Isa 40–45; Jer 8–10). For example, by taking Isa 28–33 as pre-text, light is thrown on many elements in 1 Cor 1–4. Not only the pericope 29:9–16, but also the surrounding text interacts with the text of the letter. We mention the following places:

- *Isa 29:17–24* presents a picture of salvation and restoration largely in answer to the religious-political failure portrayed in 29:9–16. The ears of the deaf will hear and the eyes of the blind will see (*Isa 29:18*, cf. 1 Cor 2:9), and the poor will glorify the Lord (*Isa 29:19*). This good news is echoed in 1 Cor 1:26–31.
- The introductory words of *Isa 29:14* (διὰ τοῦτο ἰδοὺ ἐγώ) signal a connection with *Isa 28:16*, a verse that begins with the same words. Just like *Isa 29:14*, *Isa 28:16* also announces a new work of God, but it does so in a more specific manner (the laying of a foundation stone, cf. 1 Cor 3:10).
- *Isa 28:23–29* paints the hidden logic of the wisdom of God with the parable of the wise farmer. The way he treats his crops seems at random and without purpose, but has consistency for the one who understands. This picture of the wisdom of God meshes with God’s wisdom in 1 Cor 1–4. (Cf. a possible reminiscence in 1 Cor 3:9 of the church as ‘God’s field’).
- LXX Isaiah moves from human wisdom in *Isa 29:14*, via the contrast between human plans and God’s intentions in *Isa 30:1*, to divine wisdom in *Isa 31:2*. This appears to be an underlying pattern reproduced in 1 Cor 1–2, a text that also moves from human wisdom in 1 Cor 1 to divine wisdom in 1 Cor 2.
- *Isa 31:3* thematizes the contrast between man and God (LXX, MT) with regard to having the power to save. The text also contains, as far as the MT is concerned, the opposition between flesh and Spirit (cf. 1 Cor 3:1).

Septuagint

In comparison with the Hebrew and other Greek translations, the Septuagint has its own emphases, of which some have contributed to the view of wisdom presented in 1 Cor 1–4.

- The LXX-Isaiah translator was inclined to promote the concept of plan (βουλή). This inclination is particularly manifest in Isa 28–33 and an interest in plan is also present in 1 Cor 1–4. The wisdom of God in 1 Cor 2:7 has the connotation of a plan, because the text says that God has foreordained this wisdom “before all ages for our glory.” Furthermore, “Christ the wisdom of God” (1:14, cf. 1:30), means that he is the centre of God’s plan of salvation. LXX Isaiah’s close links between σοφία and βουλή provide a basis for the meaning of ‘the wisdom of God’ in 1 Cor 1–4. The study of LXX Isaiah shows that here the origin of Paul’s understanding of wisdom as plan is to be found.
- Instead of MT Isa 40:13a, “who has measured the spirit (רוּחַ) of the Lord,” the Septuagint has “who has known the mind of the Lord” (τίς ἔγνω νοῦν κυρίου). This rendering of רוּחַ with νοῦς is unique in the Septuagint. In 1 Cor 2:16a Paul follows the Septuagint (cf. Chapter 10.1.4). Meanwhile, while retaining the concept of νοῦς, he transforms the meaning of the quotation in the light of the Christ event. The pre-text argued that God’s work is beyond the grasp of human understanding, but 1 Cor 2:16 states that ‘we’ have ‘the mind of Christ.’ In Christ there is a knowledge of God’s thoughts and intentions.
- That the foolishness of the cross is God’s way of salvation can only be recognized through faith (1 Cor 1:21). This idea is also present in LXX Isaiah. Isa 7:9 reads, “if you do not believe, you shall not understand” (cf. MT “if you do not trust, you shall not be confirmed”). LXX Isa 43:10 and 53:1 (cf. 52:15) also link faith with understanding (πιστεύω and συνίημι).
- With “let him who boasts, boast in the Lord” (1 Cor 1:31) in a climactic position in the text, Paul agrees with and continues the tendency of the Septuagint to understand the expression καυχάομαι ἐν κυρίῳ in a doxological sense.

Hebrew

There is not only a historical probability (cf. Chapter 7.1) but also a textual probability (Chapters 8–11) that the Hebrew text plays a role in Paul’s understanding of Scripture. A study of the quotations in 1 Cor 1–4 does not provide certainty that Paul relies on the Hebrew text, but some rapprochements suggest an influence of the Hebrew.

- The explicit quotation in 1 Cor 3:19 differs significantly from the Septuagint and resembles the Hebrew text of Job 5:13, even though its form may also stem from a Hebraizing version of the Septuagint.
- The Hebrew of Isa 29:14a, “so I will again do amazing things with this people, shocking and amazing,” is much more appropriate for Paul’s understanding of the cross in 1 Cor 1:18–25 than LXX Isa 29:14a, “therefore look, I will proceed to remove (or ‘transform,’ ‘umwandeln’ LXX-D) this people, I will remove them.”

- “The wisdom of the wise perishes” (Isa 29:14b MT) is more congenial to the new context than “I will destroy the wisdom of the wise” (LXX), because in 1 Cor 1 the demise of wisdom is an effect of the cross and not a separate act of God.
- The opposition of ‘flesh’ and ‘spirit’ (1 Cor 3:1) is not found in the LXX of Isa 31:3 but turns up in the Hebrew text.

These textual observations are insufficient to draw any conclusions. Moreover, the issue of *Vorlagen* is complicated because Paul feels free to adjust the quotations. On some adjustments a near consensus exists (e.g. ‘set aside’ in 1 Cor 1:19, ‘the wise’ in 3:20, and the summarizing quotation in 1:31), but we cannot be sure whether and when he adjusted the Septuagint to the Hebrew. We cannot prove recourse to the Hebrew. Yet, the opposite claim, that the Hebrew is not relevant, also remains an unwarranted presupposition.

2. The Conflict on Wisdom

Twofold wisdom

The survey of research on 1 Cor 1–4 has shown that the text of 1 Cor 1–4 concerns a conflict (see Chapter 1). Many scholars agree that the call to the readers in 1 Cor 1:10 indicates that the rhetorical argument in 1 Cor 1–4 seeks to solve that conflict. For some the conflict had a religious (Baur), for others a social (Theissen), political (Welborn) or communal (Mitchell) face. According to this study, however, the essential conflict is not a conflict between movements, parties, leaders, or traditions but between two forms of wisdom, between the ‘wisdom of the wise’ and ‘the word of the cross,’ (1:18–19).

It is striking that – except for “Greeks seek wisdom” (1:22)⁴ – 1 Cor 1–4 does not refer to wisdom as a general concept but always qualifies wisdom with a genitive. Eight different descriptions of wisdom occur in this text: ‘wisdom of word’ (1:17; 2:1), ‘the wisdom of the wise’ (1:19), ‘the wisdom of the world’ (1:20, 21; 3:19), ‘wisdom of men’ (2:5), and ‘wisdom of this age and of the rulers of this age’ (2:6), besides ‘the wisdom of God’ (1:21), ‘Christ, God’s wisdom’ (1:24, 30), and ‘God’s wisdom, secret, hidden’ (2:7).

This list shows that, in essence, 1 Cor 1–4 differentiates between two forms of wisdom. The first five designations belong together, and so do the final three. Two basic categories emerge that can be summarized as ‘wisdom of the world’ and ‘wisdom of God.’ The text speaks, on the one hand, in a general way of the ‘wisdom of the world’ (1:20). Even the desire of the Jews for signs (1:22) is considered part of the wisdom of the world. On the other hand, Christ in 1 Cor 1 and the revealed wisdom in 1 Cor 2 belong together as one and the same wisdom of God.⁵

The division between human and divine wisdom reappears in 1 Cor 2:11 in the distinction between man’s spirit and God’s spirit. The text says that only man’s spirit

⁴ With this saying also, he does not mean a concept of wisdom that covers both the wisdom of the world and the wisdom of God, but only the first, wisdom as the Greeks see it.

⁵ In the recent past a near consensus has grown that the wisdom in 1 Cor 2:6–16 is not a higher level wisdom but an explication of God’s wisdom in 1 Cor 1.

knows a man's own thoughts and that likewise only God's spirit knows God's thoughts. By assigning the knowledge of the things of God exclusively to God's spirit, this knowledge is barred from men. The distinction in verse 11, between what man's spirit knows and what God's spirit knows, prevents the idea that knowledge of the things of God may come about through some form of natural kinship between man and God.⁶ 'Spirit' is not a philosophical entity that unites God and man.⁷ Paul confirms in 1 Cor 2:11 the separation between man's spirit and God's spirit. Consequently, the wisdom of God cannot be attained through human effort, but needs to be revealed through God's Spirit (2:10, 12).

The revelation of God's wisdom in 1 Cor 2:7 does not imply a general revelation or the arrival of a universal truth. 'Wisdom of God' in 2:7 is qualified as 'in a mystery' and 'hidden.' Its revelation is partial: 'to us,' and 'through the Spirit' (2:10). For those who do not receive it, it is still 'foolishness' (2:14). Therefore, the conflict on wisdom is not resolved after the proclamation of God's wisdom in 2:6-7. The thesis in 1:18 on the divisive nature of the word of the cross governs all of 1 Cor 1-4, including 2:6-16.

The language of dispute

D.-A. Koch has observed that the apostle's recourse to Scripture is particularly dense in places where his interpretation contradicts the common or accepted (essentially Jewish) interpretation.⁸ F. Wilk concluded with regard to the book of Isaiah, that Paul quotes apologetically or polemically in 'thematische Abhandlungen,' in order to refute or correct false ideas.⁹ This study agrees with these conclusions in the specific case of the quotations in 1 Cor 1-4. Paul quotes Scripture in order to refute an understanding of wisdom that is in conflict with his gospel. With his programmatic quotation of Isa 29:14b in 1 Cor 1:19 Paul does not simply remind the Corinthians of what they already know from Scripture.¹⁰

⁶ Cf. Schrage 258: "Es ist nur eine strukturell-formale Gemeinsamkeit vorhanden ..., die aber die Inkommensurabilität von anthropologischem und theologischem Geist nicht tangiert oder einschränkt. Eine direkte Berührung oder Brücke, eine Verwandtschaft oder Konsubstantialität zwischen göttlichem und menschlichem Pneuma gibt es nicht."

⁷ Cf. Thiselton 258-9; Merklein 236-7.

⁸ Koch, *Zeuge*: "Im Gesamtvergleich zeigt sich, dass die Schriftverwendung des Paulus dort besonders dicht ist, wo er sich theologisch in direkten Widerspruch zur bisherigen (und d.h. im wesentlichen: jüdischen) Schriftauslegung begibt und dieser seine eigene Schriftinterpretation entgegenstellt. Dies tritt in besonderer Weise für die Themenbereiche des Gesetzes und der Erwählung Israels zu." (299-300) "Von hier aus ergibt sich auch eine angemessene Beurteilung der begrenzteren (aber keineswegs geringen) Anzahl von christologischen, paränetischen und eschatologischen Schriftziten oder auch von denjenigen, die die Vernichtung der σοφία τοῦ κόσμου entfalten" (301).

⁹ Wilk, *Bedeutung*, 385-6: these thematical discourses are Rom 9-11, 1 Cor 1:18-3:4, and 2 Cor 3:4-7:4 (and the paraenetic passage Rom 13:8-15:13).

¹⁰ Pace Heil, *Role*, who presupposes a consensus between Paul and his readers in the understanding of Scripture: "The Pauline alteration of Isa 29:14 in 1 Cor 1:19 coincides with and evokes what the audience has heard not only in this Isaian text but elsewhere in the scriptures

When quoting Scripture on wisdom, Paul does not go to the biblical wisdom writings but to a different, critical wisdom ‘tradition’ found in Isaiah and Jeremiah, and also in Psalms and Job.

Most Scriptural pre-texts belong to the genre of disputation. That is clearly the case for the texts from which the explicit citations are taken (Isa 29:9–16, Isa 40:12–31, Jer 9:22–23, Ψ 93:8–11 and Job 5:8–13). As a result, the language of dispute forms the background of the quotations in 1 Cor 1–4. We have noted the employment of forensic terms (κρίνω, etc.) in 1 Cor 2:13–16 and 4:1–5, which remind us of the language of dispute. The first passage deals with the question of legitimacy in speaking of the wisdom of God.

A conspicuous feature of 1 Cor 1–4 is its use of syntactic and semantic antithesis. The first sections of Chapters 8–11 showed that the text of Cor 1–4 evidences a recurring contrast. As we saw above, the basic contrast in 1 Cor 1–4 is not that between this age and God, or between the world and God, but between man and God. The wisdom of the wise and the wisdom of the world are essentially the wisdom of man. The opposition between man and God is an important structural element in 1 Cor 1–4. In a number of verses the opposition occurs literally in the language used, e.g. in 1 Cor 1:25 and 2:4, or in a different form, in e.g. 1:26, 29 (‘flesh’ for ‘man’), 2:13 (‘Spirit’ for ‘God’), and in 4:1. In other passages the opposition is articulated not in the same verse, but in the following text (cf. 3:18 with 23, and 4:3 with 5). The same contrast comes to the fore in the alternatives of boasting in men (3:21, cf. 1:29) and boasting in the Lord (1:31).

J. Weiss already drew attention to Paul’s use of antithesis that is especially prominent in 1 Cor 1–4. Weiss noted, like Schneider,¹¹ that this was not only a literary scheme but also a theological thought pattern for Paul and went on to explain this pattern from Paul’s own religious experience, especially his conversion.¹² However, the intertextual analysis in the preceding chapters indicates another important factor for Paul’s frequent employment of antithesis in 1 Cor 1–4: the role of Scripture.

All quotations come from passages that bear witness to a tension between God’s thoughts and actions and man’s religious or political practices. For example, the pre-text of 1 Cor 1:31 contains an extended antithesis (*correctio*) in LXX Jer 9:23–24 with the sequence ‘not’ (3 times) ... ‘but ...’ (“Let not the wise boast in his wisdom ... but let him who boasts, boast in this: that he knows and understand that I am the Lord ...”). In Isaiah the surprising action of God (29:14) is in conflict with the designs of human wisdom in 29:13 and 15. This antithetical pattern returns in the wider context when dealing with political plans made by the wise and the counsellors (Isa 31:1–3). God acts in opposition to their plans (Isa 28:15–16). In LXX Isa 30:1 he condemns plans that have come about “not through me” and “not through my spirit.”

about God’s destructive power over the human wisdom and intelligence of the world” (36, cf. 19).

¹¹ Schneider, *Eigenart*.

¹² J. Weiss, “Beiträge zur paulinischen Rhetorik,” *Theologische Studien* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1897) on antithesis: 175–81, on its origin: 176.

The language of creation

In Scripture man and God are not parts of a larger whole. Instead, man and God stand on two sides of a fundamental divide as creature and creator. Paul can distinguish sharply between the wisdom of men and wisdom of God because of the gap in understanding between the creator and man as a creature. Greek thought does not know this gap, because in its perspective the human and the divine share in the same rationality. A person's own rational constitution and the rationality of universal nature or god are related as part and whole.¹³ For the Greeks the divine is part of the totality of the cosmos that can be reached by reason, while in the thought of the Old Testament God exists and thinks beyond the world.¹⁴ A reality beyond the cosmos is from the Greek perspective inconceivable and can only be thought of as τὸ μὴ ὄν.¹⁵ The Greeks see the cosmos as a self-contained whole that encloses men and gods.¹⁶ The likelihood that the Corinthian community, as Hellenistic Judaism in general, was attracted to a holistic view of reality that includes access to the divine by way of wisdom, has been discussed in Chapter 6.1 and 2 (cf. esp. Salvation and Revelation).

The fundamental distinction between God and man derives ultimately from Scripture's view of creation. References to creation are manifold in Scripture, particularly in hymns, but from the intertextual perspective the presence of creation in the source texts is remarkable. The original contexts of the quotations in 1 Cor 1–4 often speak explicitly of man's relationship with God as that of a creature over against the creator. Apparently, when the prophets speak of wisdom, creation is at the back of their mind. The following statements from the contexts of the quotations make this clear:

- After the words explicitly cited in 1 Cor 1:19 (“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise ...” LXX Isa 29:14), verse 16 says, “shall the thing formed say to the one who formed it, ‘You did not form me,’ or the thing made to the one who made it, ‘You made me with no understanding?’”
- 1 Cor 1:20 refers implicitly to Isa 44:25 (“making their counsel foolish”). This text is introduced with the words, “Thus says the Lord ... who forms you from the womb ... I alone stretched out the heaven, and I bolstered the earth” (LXX Isa 44:24).
- 1 Cor 1:31 cites LXX Jer 9:23, a text that is followed by a passage contrasting helpless manmade gods with the creator: “It is the Lord who made the earth by his strength, who set upright the world by his wisdom” (LXX Jer 10:12).

¹³ A.A. Long and D.N. Sedley, *The Hellenistic Philosophers*. Volume 1 (Cambridge: University Press, 1987) 400, writing about the Stoics, and including Aristotle. Even though the divine is the highest form of reality and the principle that energizes all things, its existence is interwoven with the cosmos; cf. e.g. Aristotle, [*Mund.*] (Furley, LCL).

¹⁴ Cf. R. Bultmann, *Das Urchristentum in Rahmen der antiken Religionen* (Zürich: Artemis, 1962) 11.

¹⁵ Bultmann, *Urchristentum*, 121–2.

¹⁶ Cf. when Paul says that the apostles have become a spectacle for the cosmos, he does not clarify cosmos with ‘gods and men,’ but with ‘angels and men’ (1 Cor 4:9).

- The phrase “it shall not come up into their heart” (1 Cor 2:9) that occurs in LXX Isa 65:16c and in 65:17b encloses in 65:17a the statement, “for heaven will be new, and the earth will be new” (LXX, MT “For I am about to create new heavens and a new earth”).
- The quotation “who has known the mind of the Lord?” (LXX Isa 40:13) is part of a dispute based on God’s power in creation (40:12–31). The passage emphasizes God’s creation in combination with his hidden action in history. Both creation and history point beyond the world, to a God who cannot be compared with anything in this world. Isa 40:12–26 looks at divine wisdom from a larger, cosmic perspective, but this ‘cosmos’ is presented as God’s creation.
- The original context of the quotation from Job 5:13 in 1 Cor 3:19 hardly speaks the language of creation. Nevertheless, the whole of the book tends to give only one answer to those who search for wisdom, and that is: God is the creator, what are you?
- 1 Cor 3:20 quotes “the Lord knows the thoughts of human beings that they are vain” from Ψ 93:11, a verse that follows after the questions, “He who planted the ear, does he not hear? Or he who formed the eye, does he not perceive?” (93:9).

Accordingly, the quotations in 1 Cor 1–4 carry echoes with them from their pre-texts, that stress the radical difference and unbridgeable distance between man’s wisdom and God’s. The quotations in 1 Cor 1–4 evoke contexts that feature the language of dispute and the language of creation. The word of the cross is radically new and, at the same time, embedded in the language of Scripture.

The word of the cross

What about the question asked at the beginning: can the word of the cross be regarded as a ‘small narrative’ that enters a world where a universal narrative reigns? I think this question can be answered in the affirmative. It is striking that in 1 Cor 1:21 and 25 the text takes over the description of the gospel as foolishness, given to it by those who reject it (1:18). Salvation does not come from wisdom but through the *foolishness* of the cross. ‘Foolishness’ means that the cross does not conform to the canons of religion or wisdom (1 Cor 1:22–23). Paul describes the wisdom that rejects the cross as ‘the wisdom of this age.’ By using such comprehensive language he makes the Corinthian reservations part of a larger phenomenon. The adjectives ‘of this world’ (1:20) and ‘of this age’ (2:6) show that this wisdom has a universal character. It is not only a group of opponents that does not know, it is ‘the world’ that does not know God and his ways (1:21).

1 Cor 1–4 speaks of “God’s secret wisdom, a hidden wisdom ... which none of the rulers of this age has known” (2:7a, 8a). The text undermines the wisdom of rulers by attributing to them an ignorance that issues in an act of supreme foolishness (2:8). 1 Cor 1–4 puts the guarantors of stability and order in human society in the pillory. A statement like “God chose ‘the things that are not’ (τὰ μὴ ὄντα) to do away with ‘the things that are’ (τὰ ὄντα),” presents a break with the ancient concept of wisdom as alignment with the

established intellectual (1 Cor 1:20a), political (2:6-8) and social-cosmological (1:28) realities.¹⁷

1 Cor 1:17 knows of a λόγος in the service of wisdom, verse 18 introduces a λόγος that proclaims the cross. Looked at in this way, 1:17-18 seems to present two forms of discourse, the one alongside the other. However, these two discourses do not run parallel. The λόγος in the service of wisdom belongs to 'this age,' the age that is on its way out, while the eschatological λόγος of the cross relates to the present and the future (cf. 3:22). Moreover, the syntax of 1:17 and 1:18 does not have a parallel structure. The text does not think in terms of two alternative forms of discourse. The wisdom discourse of the world is the background, central to 1 Cor 1-4 is the word of the cross. The word of the cross may remain a small and foolish narrative within the large confines of the wisdom of this age because the cross does not fit into its totalizing vision. And yet with all its particularity, this message of the one Messiah and the historical singularity of his death on the cross has a universal scope. On it rests the salvation of the world.

¹⁷ As a philosopher puts it bluntly, this word of the cross turns out to be "a language in which foolishness, scandal and weakness supplant cognitive reason, order and power" (A. Badiou, *Saint Paul. La fondation de l'universalisme* [Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1997] 50).

APPENDIX: List of Parallels

The parallels listed in the diagram are potential explicit or implicit citations. Sources for this list are the margin of the 27th edition of Nestle–Aland’s *Novum Testamentum Graece*, an older survey by E. Hühn,¹⁸ and the recent reference work by H. Hübner.¹⁹ The words shared by the text from Scripture and the New Testament text are underlined. The Scripture texts derive from the Septuagint. When the LXX version does not have the equivalent term(s), while the MT does, this is indicated with ‘MT’ in the Scripture column and with the relevant Hebrew words in the last column. When the value of a reference consists in the thought instead of in the use of the same word(s), the phrasing of the Scripture verse is printed in italics.

1 COR	MARGIN NA ²⁷	HÜHN	HÜBNER	WORDS IN COMMON
1:18	–	–	Bar 3:28	<u>ἀπόλωντο</u> παρὰ τὸ μὴ ἔχειν φρόνησιν
1:19	Isa 29:14	+	+	<u>ἀπολῶ</u> τὴν σοφίαν τῶν σοφῶν καὶ τὴν <u>σύνεσιν</u> τῶν συνετῶν κρύψω
	Ψ 32:10	–	+	<i>κύριος διασκεδάζει βουλὰς ἐθνῶν, ἀθετεῖ δὲ λογισμοὺς λαῶν καὶ ἀθετεῖ βουλὰς ἀρχόντων</i>
1:19–20a	Isa 19:11–12	+	+	<u>ποῦ</u> εἰσιν νῦν οἱ σοφοί σου;
	Isa 33:18	+	+	ποῦ 3 times, כָּפַר – LXX γραμματικοί
1:20b	Isa 44:25 MT	+	+	כְּמִיָּם – LXX φρόνιμοι, and שָׁכַל Pi – LXX μωρεύειν
	Job 12:17 MT	–	+	לְהַלִּיץ ²⁰ – LXX ἐξέστησεν
1:24	Job 12:13	+	+	<u>σοφία</u> καὶ <u>δύναμις</u>
1:27	–	–	Bar 3:27	<u>οὐ</u> τούτους ἐξελέξατο ὁ θεός
1:31	Jer 9:22–23	+	+	<u>ἐν</u> τούτῳ <u>καυχάσθω</u> ὁ <u>καυχώμενος</u> , <u>συνίειν</u> καὶ <u>γινώσκειν</u> ὅτι ἐγὼ εἰμι <u>κύριος</u>
2:5	–	Prov	–	<i>ἴσθι πεποιθὼς ἐν ὅλῃ καρδίᾳ ἐπὶ θεῷ,</i>

¹⁸ E. Hühn, *Die alttestamentlichen Citate und Reminiscenzen im Neuen Testamente* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1900) 166–70.

¹⁹ H. Hübner, *Vetus Testamentum in Novo. Band 2: Corpus Paulinum* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1997) 224–47, replacing its predecessor W. Dittmar, *Vetus Testamentum in Novo. Die alttestamentlichen Parallelen des Neuen Testaments* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1903) 205–8.

²⁰ The po’el of לָלִץ (‘to make a fool of’). The thought expressed in Job 12:17 MT (“He leads counsellors away stripped, and makes fools of judges”) agrees with 1 Cor 1:20.

		3:5		ἐπὶ δὲ σῇ <u>σοφίᾳ</u> μὴ ἐπαίρου
2:7	-	-	Wis 6:22	τί δέ ἐστιν <u>σοφία</u> καὶ πῶς ἐγένετο, ἀπαγγελῶ καὶ οὐκ <u>ἀποκρύψω</u> ὑμῖν <u>μυστήρια</u>
2:9	Isa 64:3	+	+	οὐκ ἠκούσαμεν οὐδὲ οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ [ἡμῶν] <u>εἶδον</u>
	Isa 52:15	-	-	οἷς οὐκ ἀνηγγέλη περὶ αὐτοῦ, ὅψονται, καὶ οἷ οὐκ ἀκηκόασιν, συνήσουσιν
	Isa 65:16	+	+	οὐκ ἀναβήσεται αὐτῶν ἐπὶ τὴν <u>καρδίαν</u>
	Jer 3:16	-	+	οὐκ ἀναβήσεται ἐπὶ <u>καρδίαν</u>
	Sir 1:10	+	+	τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτόν
2:10-11	Prov 20:27	+	+	φῶς κυρίου <u>πνοή ἀνθρώπων</u> , ὃς <u>ἐρευνᾷ</u> <u>ταμίεια κοιλίας</u>
2:11	Zech 12:1	-	+	πνεῦμα ἀνθρώπου ἐν αὐτῷ
2:16	Isa 40:13	+	+	τίς ἔγνω νοῦν κυρίου, καὶ τίς αὐτοῦ σύμβουλος ἐγένετο, ὃς συμβιβᾷ αὐτόν;
2:16	Wis 9:13	+	+	τίς γὰρ ἄνθρωπος <u>γνώσεται βουλήν θεοῦ;</u>
3:8	-	Prov 24:12	+	ὃς ἀποδίδωσιν <u>ἐκάστῳ</u> κατὰ τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ
3:10	Isa 3:3	+	+	σόφος ἀρχιτέκτων
3:12-13	-	Prov 17:3	+	ὥσπερ <u>δοκιμάζεται ἐν καμίνῳ ἄργυρος</u> καὶ <u>χρυσός</u> , οὕτως ἐκλεκταὶ <u>καρδίαι</u> παρὰ <u>κυρίῳ</u>
	-	-	Prov 16:2	πάντα τὰ ἔργα τοῦ ταπεινοῦ <u>φανερὰ</u> παρὰ τῷ θεῷ
3:17	Ψ 64:5	-	+	ἅγιος, ναός
	Ψ 78:1	-	-	ἅγιος, ναός
3:19	Job 5:13	+	+	ὁ καταλαμβάνων <u>σοφοὺς ἐν τῇ φρονήσει</u> <u>מַחֲרֵב מִחֲכָה לֵב</u>
3:20	Ψ 93:11	+	+	κύριος γινώσκει τοὺς <u>διαλογισμοὺς τῶν</u> <u>ἀνθρώπων ὅτι εἰσὶν μάταιοι</u>
4:4	Job 27:6	+	+	οὐ γὰρ σύννοια ἐμαυτῷ
4:10	Prov 3:7	-	+	μὴ ἴσθι <u>φρόνιμος</u> παρὰ <u>σεαυτῷ</u>
4:12	Ψ 108: 28	+	+	לָל Pi – LXX καταρᾶσθαι, ²¹ and ךָל Qal – LXX εὐλογεῖν
4:13	Prov 21:18	-	+	περικάθαρμα, hapax LXX

²¹ In Ψ 108:28 לָל Pi is rendered καταρᾶσθαι as usually when evil speaking is directed towards God. When directed towards man לָל Pi is translated with κακολογέω (Ex 21:16, Ezek 22:7) or κακῶς λέγω (Lev 19:14; 20:9), often against a father or mother, or against a leader (Isa 8:21). These Greek verbs are near synonyms of λοιδορέω and δυσφημέω in 1 Cor 4:13 (cf. notes in Chapter 3). In the next two verses (14–15) Paul describes himself as a father to the Corinthians.

	Tob 5:19	-	+	περίψημα, harax LXX
	-	Isa 30:22b	-	ὥς κόπρον ὥσεις αὐτά
4:14	Wis 11:10	-		ὥς πατήρ (1 Cor 2:14 ὥς τέκνα μου) <u>νουθετῶν</u>
4:15	-	Jer 3:3	-	καὶ ἔσχες ποιμένας πολλοὺς εἰς πρόσκομμα σεαυτῇ
4:21	Job 37:13 MT ²²	-	-	אִם-לִשְׁבֹּט ... אִם-לְשַׁבֵּט (שְׁבֹט – LXX παιδεία)

²² Not in NA²⁷ but suggested by C. Spicq, “Une reminiscence de Job xxxvii, 13 dans 1 Cor iv, 21?” *RB* 33, 509-12. In addition to the use of שְׁבֹט (as stick for discipline in LXX not here but elsewhere translated with “ῥάβδος,” *TWNT* 6, 967), the apostle puts before the Corinthians the same alternative as in Job 37:13: reproduire ici la dichotomie du gouvernement divin, telle qu’elle est formulée par Job xxxvii, 13: ‘Soit pour châtement (שְׁבֹט) il accomplit sa volonté, soit pour miséricorde (חַסֵּד) il la réalise” (510).

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Summary

The conclusions at the end of Part II and Part III summarize the findings of the preceding chapters. Some more general observations will be made in this summary.

This study on 1 Corinthians 1–4 agrees with the widely accepted view within New Testament research that the text concerns itself with a conflict, but disagrees with the prevailing view that the nature of the conflict is sociological (cf. Chapter 1). It argues that the essence of the conflict is theological in nature and concerns wisdom. The two views on wisdom that collide are religious in the sense that they deal with salvation. This perspective on 1 Corinthians 1–4 results from a consideration of its rhetorical and thematic structure in Chapters 4 and 5 and is supported by the study of the text's relationship with Scripture in Chapters 7–11.

The beginning of the argument (1 Cor 1:18) focuses on the cross as the place where the ways part. For Paul the cross is the heart of the gospel, while for 'the world' the cross is foolishness. Paul then adopts this verdict of the world and speaks of the cross as the foolishness of God, but does not leave it there and proclaims that this foolishness of God is wiser than the world. This paradox of God's wise foolishness rests on the contrast between divine and human wisdom. In 1 Cor 2:10–16 the contrast has the form of an opposition between the Spirit of God and the natural abilities of man. The letter argues here that there is no reception and no understanding of the wisdom of God without the revelation and teaching of God's Spirit.

Chapter 6 seeks to show that a very plausible explanation for the increased interest in wisdom in the church of Corinth is Jewish-Hellenistic influence. The Wisdom of Solomon and the writings of Philo exemplify this influence. According to Paul, the Corinthians' desire for wisdom weakens their faith in the crucified Christ as God's way of salvation. In countering their ideas on wisdom, Paul does not take recourse to Jewish-Hellenistic sources. His position on wisdom resembles the Apocalyptic tradition and the writings of Qumran with respect to the need for revelation and the role of the Spirit. This does not mean that these writings are Paul's sources. Just as it is true for the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Apocalyptic literature, Paul's goldmine and arsenal is Scripture.

Part III shows that Scripture is an essential background for understanding the conflict on wisdom in 1 Cor 1–4. Chapter 2 outlined and Chapter 7 develops an appropriate intertextual approach that enables us to chart this background. Chapters 8–11 put the theory into practice. It becomes clear that the central theme of 1 Cor 1–4 and the way it is unfolded relate closely to the function of wisdom in the pre-texts from which the citations (or 'quotations') originate. The quotations closely link the conflict on wisdom in 1 Cor 1–4 with a critical wisdom tradition present in Isaiah, Jeremiah, and even in Job and Psalms. Scripture manifests itself in 1 Cor 1–4 especially in the area of the conflict on wisdom. When at first sight the title and subtitle of this study announce two different subjects, research reveals that the two are closely intertwined.

1 Cor 1–4 is connected with Scripture by means of explicit and implicit citations. Explicit citations usually employ an introductory formula, while implicit ones unobtrusively reproduce fragments of Scripture but this does not necessarily diminish their significance. The quotations are not only part of the letter but also belong to the

fabric of their original context and activate that context in relation to 1 Cor 1–4. Summarily, this study has arrived at an intertextual approach with the following characteristics:

1. In addition to the central category of citation, the study employs a methodological distinction between citation and *topos*, i.e. a phrase or expression that has become generally available and cannot be retraced to one particular passage.
2. The context of a citation needs to be extended from a pericope as the smaller circle to that of a chapter or a cluster of chapters as the larger concentric circle. For example, in the case of the first citation from Isa 29:14b, not only Isa 29:9–16 turns out to be intertextually relevant, but also Isa 28–33 as well.
3. The final parts of the Chapters 8–11 focus on the discontinuities and continuities between pre-texts and text. The transition from pre-text to receptor text may entail semantic, thematic, or pragmatic repetition or transformation. This is also true for genre and style.
4. Concerning the form of the pre-texts, the Septuagint is the preeminent but not the exclusive source of the quotations. Paul also employs a Hebraizing revision of the Septuagint or – from memory or through reading – the Hebrew text. The interesting question is: How did Paul read the Septuagint? Did he regard it as a translation? What was the semantic value of the Greek words for him? What intentions did he perceive within these pre-texts? Did knowledge of the Hebrew make him sensitive for particular semantic and pragmatic aspects that are less obvious or even absent in the Septuagint? Many scholars would regard these questions as anachronistic and inappropriate like a desire for deep-water fishing in a pond. Nevertheless, these difficult questions deserve more attention than they have received so far. By including a consideration of the Hebrew version of the pre-texts, this study has attempted to throw some light on these questions in the special case of a portion of one of Paul's letters.

The last Chapter also reflects on the phenomenon that for the Greeks, and probably also to some extent for the Corinthians, wisdom is *one* while for Paul wisdom is *two*. 1 Corinthians 1–4 consistently divides wisdom. This approach to wisdom is at odds with the general tendency of Hellenistic Judaism. What is the origin of Paul's divisive approach to wisdom? Scripture turns out to play a very important role in this respect. Two major intertextual patterns emerge that determine Paul's view of wisdom. In the first place, the rhetorical argument of Paul is a reflection of the prophetic genre of disputation, a genre that presupposes and embodies a conflict between two points of view. In the second place, the conflict between the wisdom of man and the wisdom of God ultimately rests on the fundamental difference between man the creature and God the creator. This is what the contexts of the citations clearly indicate: the motif of creation returns frequently in the relevant pericopes and pre-texts. To put this in philosophical language – paying at least a final terminological tribute to the Greeks – 1 Cor 1–4 implicitly repeats and reuses the Biblical notion that an epistemological divide is the necessary corollary of the ontological gap between God and man.

Samenvatting

De inhoud van deze studie, “Conflict over wijsheid. De rol van de Schrift in 1 Korintiërs 1–4”, kan worden samengevat met drie trefwoorden uit de titel: ‘conflict’, ‘wijsheid’ en ‘Schrift’. Hoofdstuk 1 biedt een overzicht van de meest gangbare benaderingen van het conflict dat zich manifesteert in de tekst 1 Korintiërs 1–4. Wanneer we in 1 Kor 1–4 te maken hebben met een sociaal conflict dan zouden sociologische en retorische benaderingen van de tekst het meest op hun plaats zijn. Maar anders dan in de meeste recente studies wordt de essentie van het conflict in deze studie gezien als een theologische kwestie. De kern van het probleem is volgens de brieveschrijver gelegen in het conflict tussen de boodschap van de gekruisigde Christus en de opvattingen over wijsheid die hebben postgevat onder de Korintiërs. Die opvattingen zijn echter niet gnostisch van aard zoals de eerdere *religionsgeschichtliche* benadering meende, maar joods-hellenistisch.

De bronnen van Paulus’ opvatting van wijsheid moeten gezocht worden in de Schrift, omdat Paulus in het kader van de discussie over wijsheid steeds daar een beroep op doet, met de uitdrukkingen “want er staat geschreven” (1:19, [2:16,] 3:19, 20) en “zoals er staat geschreven” (1:31, 2:9). De citaten functioneren niet slechts als bewijsteksten. Deze intertextuele studie wil de relatie laten zien tussen de nieuwe context van de citaten en de literaire context waaruit ze voortkomen. Hoofdstuk 2 bespreekt waarom intertextualiteit een geschikte benadering is voor de brieven van Paulus. In het derde deel van deze studie, blijkt wat deze benadering in de praktijk oplevert.

Hoofdstuk 4 bespreekt de rol van de antieke retorica in Paulus’ geschriften. De apostel is vertrouwd met de in zijn tijd gangbare conventies om een argument te presenteren. Maar dat betekent niet dat hij zich gebonden toont aan retorische regels. Zijn brieven geven blijk van compositorische vrijheid. Bijvoorbeeld, anders dan voor retorische toespraken gold (één thema), behandelt hij in 1 Korintiërs verschillende kwesties na elkaar. Zo kan binnen de brief het gedeelte 1 Kor 1–4 beschouwd worden als een zelfstandig betoog. Anders dan de meeste brieven van zijn tijd, hebben die van Paulus niet tot doel het uitdelen van lof of blaam. Evenmin gaat het in 1 Kor 1–4 in de eerste plaats om een persoonlijke verdediging. Doel is het overtuigen van een publiek met betrekking tot een belangrijke kwestie. Daarmee komt de brief overeen met toespraken van het deliberatieve genre.

Wat in 1 Kor 1–4 de belangrijkste kwestie is, komt in hoofdstuk 5 aan de orde. In tegenstelling tot wat vaak wordt aangenomen, zijn partijschappen niet het kernthema. De terminologie die gebruikelijk was in politieke toespraken die verdeeldheid willen bestrijden, komt hier nauwelijks voor. Bovendien zegt Paulus verderop in de brief (11:19) dat scheuringen onvermijdelijk zijn. Ook stelt hij in 1:18 dat het woord van het kruis tweespalt brengt. Van de verschillende thema’s blijkt wijsheid het meeste gewicht te hebben. Het staat centraal in de aanvang (1:18–25) en blijft aan de orde tot in de voorlaatste perikoop (4:1–13). De hoge frequentie in 1 Kor 1–4 van ‘wijsheid’ en ‘wijs’, termen die elders in Paulus’ brieven zeer schaars zijn, laat zien dat er juist op dit gebied iets wezenlijks aan de hand is.

Voordat de intertextuele analyse haar beslag krijgt in deel III, plaatst hoofdstuk 6 de discussie over wijsheid in 1 Kor 1-4 in een historische context. Joods-hellenistische invloeden in Korinte zijn aannemelijk vanwege de connectie met Alexandrië d.m.v. Apollos, de tendens in de gemeente om lichaam en geest te scheiden (1 Kor 6) en de afwijzing door sommigen van de opstanding (1 Kor 15). Joods-hellenistisch is ook de vooronderstelling die achter de houding van de Korintiërs schuilgaat, namelijk het idee dat wijsheid de mens op een hoger geestelijk plan brengt. Paulus' reactie, daarentegen, vertoont eerder overeenkomsten met Qumran en apocalyptische geschriften, vooral in de overtuiging dat reddende wijsheid een geschenk van God is, dat deze samenhangt met Gods daden in de geschiedenis en tot mensen moet komen door middel van openbaring.

Het eerste hoofdstuk van deel III bespreekt de wijze waarop 1 Kor 1-4 intertekstueel gerelateerd is aan preteksten uit het Oude Testament. Duidelijk is dat de Septuaginta de centrale rol vervult als bron voor de citaten. Dit onderzoek houdt echter ook rekening met de mogelijke rol van het Hebreeuws in Paulus' verstaan en citeren van de Schrift. Voorts spreken we, in afwijking van het vaak gehanteerde onderscheid tussen citaten en allusies en in navolging van W. Weren, van expliciete en impliciete citaten, waarbij expliciete citaten gewoonlijk een inleidende formule hebben (zoals "er staat geschreven"). Een praktische reden voor het hanteren van slechts één categorie (citaten) is het nogal arbitraire karakter van het onderscheid tussen citaat en allusie. Het gevolg daarvan is dat wetenschappers in concrete gevallen nogal eens van mening verschillen. Zwaarder weegt de theoretische reden dat het bij expliciete en impliciete citaten in literair opzicht gaat om hetzelfde procédé: de brief heeft een tekstfragment uit een andere tekst in zich opgenomen. Vervolgens is gaandeweg tijdens het onderzoek duidelijk geworden dat de context van een citaat breder moet worden genomen dan een perikoop. Een bredere aanpak is daarom het gevolg voor deel III. Bijvoorbeeld, met betrekking tot de geciteerde woorden uit Jesaja 29:14 komen niet alleen de omliggende verzen (29:9-16) voor overweging in aanmerking, maar ook de omliggende hoofdstukken 28-33.

De hoofdstukken 8 tot en met 11 hebben dezelfde opzet. Ze beginnen in de eerste paragraaf met het signaleren van bijzondere literaire kenmerken van de onderhavige tekstgedeelten, resp. 1 Kor 1:18-25, 1:26-31, 2:1-16 en 3:1-4:21. Vervolgens bestudeert de tweede paragraaf de context van de citaten in de Schrift. De derde paragraaf brengt de lijnen van de eerste twee paragrafen samen en beschrijft de impact van de citaten in context op het briefgedeelte.

In hoofdstuk 8 valt het antithetische en paradoxale spreken in 1 Kor 1:18-25 op. Daarna worden het expliciete citaat in 1 Kor 1:19 (uit Jes 29:14) en de impliciete citaten in 1 Kor 1:20 (uit Jes 19:11-12 en 44:25) in hun oorspronkelijke context onderzocht. Die teksten blijken te gaan over de trotse wijsheid van hooggeplaatste adviseurs, een wijsheid die uitmondt in een politiek-militair beleid. Daartegenover staat Gods wijsheid die niet serieus genomen wordt omdat ze haaks staat op het algemeen gangbare politieke en militaire verstand. Voor de goede verstaander echter, heeft ze toch een samenhang of eigen logica (Jes 28:21, 23-29). Het contrast tussen deze twee vormen van wijsheid blijft van belang in Jes 28-33 (vgl. 30:1; 31:1-3).

Hoofdstuk 9 staat eerst stil bij de op een doel gerichte structuur van 1 Kor 1:26-31. Deze tekst definieert de Korintiërs op een nieuwe wijze die afsteekt tegen wat zij waren 'naar het vlees' en zijn in de ogen van de wereld (1:26-28). Met het citaat in 1 Kor 1:31

uit Jer 9:22-23 blijkt ook Jeremia, evenals Jesaja zeer kritisch tegenover de wijsheid van wijzen en schriftgeleerden te staan (vgl. Jer 8:8-9; 9:12). Jeremia verwerpt hier het zich beroemen op wijsheid, rijkdom en macht. In de brief klinkt deze drieslag door in de aan het citaat voorafgaande tekst (1 Kor 1:27-29). Jeremia roept het volk op om zich te beroemen op het kennen van de Heer en zich niet te beroemen op menselijke verworvenheden. Paulus spreekt kortweg over 'roemen in de Heer'. De korte pericoop (Jer 9:22-23) wordt in 1 Kor 1:31 samenvattend geciteerd. De uitdrukkingen 'roem' en 'roemen in de Heer' hebben in de Septuaginta de bijklank van 'lof' en 'loven' zodat de eerste literaire climax in 1 Kor 1-4 in 1 Kor 1:31 eindigt als een doxologie.

In hoofdstuk 10 blijkt in 1 Kor 2:6-16 dat naast de citaten in 2:9 en 2:16 ook onderliggende patronen van de Schrift worden gereproduceerd. Het belangrijkste patroon betreft de hoofdlijn van 1 Kor 1-2 die loopt van de afwijzing van mensenwijsheid (1 Kor 1) naar de verkondiging van Gods wijsheid (1 Kor 2). Dit patroon is duidelijk traceerbaar in de overgang van Jes 29:14 naar Jes 31:2. De brief en het profetenboek maken dezelfde beweging (vgl. ook Jeremia: van afwijzing van mensenwijsheid in 8:8-9 en 9:12, 22-23 naar verkondiging van Gods wijsheid in 10:12). De beide citaten in 1 Kor 2 komen uit Jesaja. 1 Kor 2:9 is in essentie een samensmelting van Jes 64:4 (LXX) en Jes 65:17. De verheven stijl van het citaat accentueert de inhoud: wat God bereid heeft, gaat het kennen door menselijke vermogens te boven. Vers 16 lijkt dit onvermogen te herhalen met het citaat "wie kent de gezindheid van de Heer?" Dan volgt echter als resultaat van de openbaring van Gods wijsheid in 2:10-15 het verrassende, "wij echter hebben de gezindheid van Christus". Opvallend is de overgang in Jes 40:13 van de Hebreeuwse tekst naar de Septuaginta: voor 'geest' (*ruach*) staat 'gezindheid' (*nous*) en 'meten' wordt 'kennen'. Paulus neemt de verwoording van de Septuaginta over en beëindigt daarmee 2:6-16 met een accent op *nous*. Dit cognitieve accent kwam al naar voren in 2:6-16 met de steeds terugkerende werkwoorden 'kennen', 'uitleggen' en 'begrijpen'.

Hoofdstuk 11 bespreekt 1 Kor 3-4 met de praktische uitwerking van de wijsheid nadat in 1 Kor 1-2 de nadruk lag op wat wijsheid is. Gods wijsheid krijgt vorm door wijs te bouwen (3:10). De laatste twee expliciete citaten uit Job en de Psalmen (1 Kor 3:19-20) bevestigen de beweringen in 1 Kor 1 omtrent de wijsheid van mensen. Het laatste citaat suggereert ook een nieuw perspectief. Het eerste citaat in 1 Kor 1-4 uit Jes 29:14 wordt in de pretekst onmiddellijk gevolgd door 'wee' hen die plannen maken zonder te luisteren naar de Heer (Jes 29:15). Het laatste expliciete citaat in 1 Kor 1-4 uit LXX Psalm 93:11 wordt in de pretekst onmiddellijk gevolgd door 'gezegend' de mens die luistert naar de Heer (LXX Ps 93:12). Wie de Schrift kent, en dat geldt in ieder geval voor de auteur die citeert, hoort in gedachten het woord dat volgt op een citaat. Terwijl in 1 Kor 1-2 werkwoorden in de verleden en de tegenwoordige tijd overheersen, wordt in 1 Kor 3-4 vanwege het gebruik van de toekomstige tijd de blik gericht naar de toekomst, waarin geplant en gebouwd wordt.

Het laatste hoofdstuk (12) pakt enkele belangrijke lijnen uit de studie op. Algemeen aanvaard is het gegeven dat de Septuaginta functioneert als Paulus' uitgangstekst. Dat gegeven reikt verder dan het niveau van woordgebruik. De voorkeur van de Septuaginta voor intellectueel georiënteerde termen reikt hem niet alleen de term *nous* aan (Jes 40:13), maar correspondeert ook met de cognitieve terminologie in 1 Kor

2:6-16. De nauwe verbinding die de Septuaginta legt tussen wijsheid en plan (vgl. het veelvuldige gebruik van *boulē* zonder equivalent in Jes 28-33, 55:8) verklaart de ongebruikelijke inkleuring van Gods wijsheid als plan in 1 Kor 2:7. Wat betreft de invloed van de Hebreeuwse tekst, kan de invloed daarvan op de verwoording en het verstaan van de citaten in de brief niet met zekerheid worden aangetoond maar toch lijkt deze op sommige plaatsen aannemelijk.

Hoofdstuk 12 eindigt met een beschouwing over het gebruik van wijsheid in 1 Kor 1-4. Opvallend is het feit dat deze tekst geen algemeen begrip 'wijsheid' kent. Wijsheid wordt altijd nader gekwalificeerd als wijsheid van de wereld of als wijsheid van God. Het tweevoudig verstaan van wijsheid in deze tekst correspondeert met het tweevoudig verstaan van *logos*. Er is een *logos* die hoort bij de wijsheid van de wereld (1:17) en er is een *logos* die hoort bij het kruis (1:18). Deze *logos* gaat door voor dwaasheid binnen de zienswijze van de wereld. Dezelfde tegenstelling treedt op tussen het woord van de profeet enerzijds en de wijsheid van de wijzen en raadgevers anderzijds, zodat het denken in tegenstellingen dat zo kenmerkend is voor 1 Kor 1-4 haar bron vindt in de Profeten en sommige plaatsen in Psalmen en Job.

Ten slotte, het conflict over wijsheid steunt niet alleen op twistgesprekken in de Profeten maar ook op de tegenstelling tussen God en mens die berust op het onoverbrugbare verschil tussen Schepper en schepsel. Deze achtergrond spreekt mee in 1 Kor 1-4 wanneer Paulus de Korintische ideeën over wijsheid wil corrigeren. Zij waren beïnvloed door het Griekse denken in termen van slechts één wijsheid, die van de alomvattende *kosmos*, waarbinnen het goddelijke en het menselijke inbegrepen zijn. Opvallend is dat het thema van de schepping zo vaak verschijnt in de onmiddellijke context van de citaten (Jes 29:16; Jes 44:24; Jer 10:12; Jes 65:17; Jes 40:12-31; LXX Psalm 93:9). De in de preteksten aanwezige visie op de schepping impliceert een ontologische kloof, die op haar beurt een epistemologische kloof met zich meebrengt. Daarom is zonder openbaring God niet te kennen en ook zijn wijsheid niet. Paulus identificeert deze wijsheid met het woord van het kruis dat zwak en dwaas is. Dit kruis is niet uit te wissen in het evangelie en evenmin in het leven van de apostelen, en zo ook niet in het leven van de gemeente te Korinte. Toch heeft dit kleine dwaze verhaal een universele betekenis en de wereld (*kosmos*) komt opnieuw in het vizier in 1 Kor 3:22 samen met alle dingen die gegeven zijn in Christus. 1 Kor 3:21-23 bevat de literaire en theologische climax die laat zien dat langs de weg van het kruis uiteindelijk de *kosmos* gewonnen wordt.